













A NEW GOVERNMENT  
FOR THE BRITISH EMPIRE

*BY THE SAME AUTHOR*

**THE ROMAN EMPIRE**

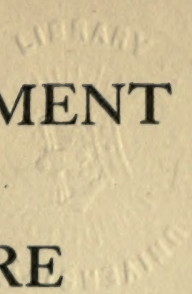
Essays on the  
Constitutional History from the  
Accession of Domitian (81 A.D.) to  
the Retirement of Nicephorus III.  
(1081 A.D.)

**2 vols. 8vo, 28s. net.**

**LONGMANS, GREEN, AND CO.**  
LONDON, NEW YORK, BOMBAY, AND CALCUTTA



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# A NEW GOVERNMENT FOR THE BRITISH EMPIRE

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"ESSAYS ON THE CONSTITUTIONAL HISTORY OF THE ROMAN EMPIRE,"

"CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY AND SOCIAL PROGRESS" (BAMPTON

LECTURES, 1905), ETC.

LONGMANS, GREEN, AND CO.


39 PATERNOSTER ROW, LONDON

NEW YORK, BOMBAY, AND CALCUTTA

1912

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TO THE  
EARL OF ROSEBERY

A MARK OF AFFECTION AND RESPECT

MY DEAR LORD ROSEBERY,

*You have most kindly allowed me to dedicate this little book to you. May I state briefly my reasons for writing it? I see the failure of most of the old promises, the confessed unpopularity of government as such, the confusion and conflict of sectional interests, the determination of the aggrieved to resist law. I see economic and social troubles succeeding to the old Liberal problems of Freedom, a harsh and coercive centralism succeeding to the old belief in self-government. I see one factor in our triple sovereignty, to all effect and purpose moribund,—the House of Commons. I see the second still respected but in an ambiguous state, and suffering from a recent attempt to impair its use. I see the third, the Monarchy, being transformed into the tool of any faction in power, just at the time when contention is most serious, and the royal prerogative strained to silence criticism of extraordinary steps and win obedience for vindictive and coercive measures. I see the Cabinet in power swayed by a few men of conviction and ability, losing all claim to be called representative, and in any strict parlance ceasing to be responsible.*

*Meantime every class and party seem bent on securing wide increase of powers for this anomalous and ill-balanced centre! Government thereby becomes a brief Dictatorship of one or two able and determined men, who will be as much detested by half the nation as they are popular with the other. The question remains to ask, 'Who is fit to be entrusted with this indefinite prerogative claimed by the modern State?'*

*I will answer, Neither of our present parties, nor the complex of the Constitution as a whole—if we are to keep clear of revolution.*

*The only hope, if we are to save our country and a semblance of genuine democracy, would seem to lie in breaking up the powers*

*which, nominally concentrated in our Single Chamber, are really in the hands of any dangerously clever Minister: in remodelling the House of Peers so as to become an Imperial organ, commanding respect, and, because non-elective, representative and responsible in a true sense: finally, in these days of rancour and suspicion, in drawing upon that fund of loyalty which lies behind all our disputes and personal grievances, in submitting ourselves to the wise arbitrage of the Sovereign.*

*I cannot expect you, my dear Lord, to concur in all the views herein expressed. But in the painful friction and short-sighted opportunism of politics and statesmen to-day, I have dedicated my book to one who has always set a far higher standard, and has always achieved a far higher ideal.*

*I am,*

*Your Lordship's very faithful servant,*

*F. W. BUSSELL.*

*Mundham,*

*Near Norwich,*

*August 26, 1912.*



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# NEW GOVERNMENT FOR THE BRITISH EMPIRE

## INTRODUCTION

It may safely be assumed that few are satisfied with the present situation in politics or, indeed, with the whole social outlook. Reasons for anxiety, always present, if sometimes disguised, may be summed up as follows: the dangerous rivalry of interests, sectional conflict, a landless people, an aggrieved industrial proletariat, professional statesmen, threatened retirement of a still influential and trusted class from public business, premiums on official and expert services, disappearance of gratuitous duties issuing out of the life of average citizens, ubiquitous distrust of direct consultation of the people, deadlock of government by equally-divided parties, increasing use of coercion, and complete decay of moral force in the State. To these symptoms of a thoroughly unhealthy condition, may be added the universal lack of respect towards Authority, of which a striking instance has perhaps been the immediate incentive to the writer of this essay. <sup>Actual dangers.</sup>

It is suggested in the following pages that while the real character of our complex nation remains sound, all public and political influences, methods and vocabulary are alike demoralizing. An entirely false view is given by the insincere rancour of party spirit. Friendly intercourse between the classes is still the rule in actual life; but we may easily drift into civil war some day, because <sup>Evils of Party Spirit.</sup>

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'Democracy' a phrase.

we are so often told that we are already engaged in it. The bitterness of parliament and party (though often fictitious) can easily be reflected with disastrous effect on our whole national life. This position is due, not to the supposed application of 'democracy,' but to the fact that no effort is made to apply it at all. A centralized government, uniting all the forces of the old monarchic State-absolutism, is not, and cannot be, democracy. If there is any value in the old Liberal idealism, the doctrine of 'freedom' must be carefully examined. Some attempt must be made to make it a reality to the ordinary man.

Part I.  
(a) Origin  
of the  
State.

The *first* enquiry must ask, what is the nature of the State,—its origin in a narrow kindred circle, its extension by kingship, slavery, or conquest, and the accidental and artificial character of most of the congeries called 'Nations' to-day? The body politic is treated in the light of various analogies, which seem to help us to understand its aim and purpose; as family, flock, army, organism, benefit or 'mutual aid' society. Attention will be drawn to the fact that modern nations are the creatures of Royalty, and rest on tacit or explicit covenants between rulers and ruled—a contract visible enough, even in the earliest days, between government or ruling class (nearly always alien and invading), and a subject race. This is true in our own time, when the State appears in the light of a joint-stock corporation for common life and mutual profit, with a shifting board of directors chosen by the shareholders. Here, the contract is explicit, and its secular and utilitarian motive conspicuous.

Spiritual  
or moral  
aim of  
State  
doubtful.

But many are wont to listen readily to idealism talking of the lofty spiritual aim of the State, as a human brotherhood for moral ends for which the citizen must live and, if need be, die. These will be impatient of a sordid and material conception. To such it will be



said that there is a large realm of agreement between men, disunited enough on other points, in which the State may still be a religious community for the maintenance of order and equity, the relief of want, the development of the finer virtues and talents. But this is just that aspect of the State which is to-day put wholly in the background. In speaking now of the State, we imply to most ears the government of the moment, which (an unhappy and unexpected result) can never hope to count on the support of more than half the people. It seems clear that it would be unfair and unwise in the extreme to entrust any such party (however patriotic its professions) with the wider powers now demanded for the State. The governing class will have to command the respect and allegiance of a far larger proportion of citizens; that is, if we wish to avoid constant peril of revolution from the faction for the moment aggrieved and out in the cold.

It will be pointed out as a grave disability in a nominally free State, that government, in spite of its popular methods, has never put off the *foreignness*, the *alien* and *external* character which was probably its chief feature in early times. This foreignness was easily supported when, under the old despotisms, local life and freedom was left very much to itself; when little demand was made beyond tribute and that personal service in war which gave the conquered peoples a chance of rising to a high place in the new artificial State. But, with increasing interference, the policy and success of the partial and shifting government of to-day seem doubtful. It does not enlist the sympathy or ready obedience of the subject-class; and, under whatever form of popular election, cannot divest itself of its alien character, nor lay aside its coercive methods.

The real issue is this: granted the extension of the duties and competence of the State, what State is it we to-day not based on 'uni-

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versal  
consent.'

mean? for absolute uniformity on any but a very few points (law, police, public order, national defence) is little to the taste of the present age. It would be mischievous and explosive in the highest degree if it were attainable, or for a moment attained. Free government is now found to be anything but what was promised; namely, government by universal consent. The more detailed the curiosity of the central power, and the busier its lawmaking, the more acrimonious will be the resistance. To thrust further duties and, therefore, further powers of compulsion upon a form of government already unpopular is to court disaster. A State in which parties and votes are almost equally divided is only secure if its managers agree to give up strong language and strong measures and confine themselves to routine work. In such a community legislation on new or satisfactory lines becomes almost impossible.

Govern-  
ment still  
dicta-  
torial.

The people at large in all ages have been content to delegate their powers, to criticize and to displace their agents. This is as true of the old absolute monarchies (so-called) as of the most carefully devised 'constitutional' government. Professor Seeley has done good service in exposing an ancient fallacy: that some momentous change came over the whole nature of government when 'free and representative institutions' were devised. Throughout history (even in a theocracy) power is inherent in the mass, but is exercised by a few. Most countries show the long tenure by a close oligarchy of families, of birth, of religious precedence or of wealth, as in Athens or Venice, or any feudal land of the Middle Ages. 'Reform' enters with a liberal-minded monarch, alive to public needs and the present waste of opportunity and good material. Either as tyrant or demagogue or born king, he puts himself at the head of popular discontent, throws down the barriers of caste, and opens a career for plebeian merit. Political prudence or kingly

indolence is apt, when once the organism has thus become self-conscious, to thrust back the sovereign into seclusion and give his task to a Mayor of the Palace. The era of absolutism (so-called) is really the era of great Ministers, — Walpole, Chatham, Pitt, Fleury, Pombal, Metternich. Up to the end of last century, the English Government was in the hands of one of two protagonists. Yet although it may be said that public opinion pointed (somewhat vaguely) at the minister it preferred, whether Beaconsfield or Gladstone, it cannot be pretended that he was directly chosen by the people, who indeed had no voice in the matter. There was no personal *plébiscite* as in France under the third Napoleon. Although the form of government was technically 'free,' and liberty of debate unfettered, the people were not consulted as to their dictator much more directly than in the days of Richelieu.

The  
People do  
not choose  
their  
rulers.

We are in the same plight to-day. Government for the time being is absolute, as of old; perhaps neither more nor less sensitive than the former despotisms, which, for their own safety, felt the public pulse with anxious care. The chief minister's power is limited only by the fact that every movement on his part is treated as contentious, and overwhelmed with contumely. There is no pretence at harmony in parliament, save in the rare occasions of a crisis, a strike, and (perhaps) a war. Meantime, half the nation look on grumbling and criticizing; and recent years have done nothing to soften these asperities. How far can we say they are represented at all? or more fully than under the forms of absolute monarchy? Granting the not wholly certain point that the other half are much better satisfied, their leaders being in power, the opposition must be content with the hope of expelling their present rulers with ignominy. Such a peculiar attitude towards authority would bring disaster on any country that was not filled

Half the  
nation  
always  
disfranchised.



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with the spirit of fair play, compromise and good humour; and, above all, had a sincere agreement upon the essentials. Yet these essentials are in the nature of things, pushed more and more into the background. Only the contentious and the acrimonious is seen in the forefront.

(c) A  
'govern-  
ing class.'

But besides personal rulers who really dictate a national policy, there remains to be considered another factor, a '*governing class*.' The people want a leader, but they also need officials to carry through new legislative changes, and a social rank with leisure and capacity for routine-duties. It seems clear that this is a grave question for the time; what type of rulers we want in a modern state, and what type we are likely to get? If during nine-tenths of recorded history, neither monarch nor people have really governed, the important issue is who in effect is to carry out these duties which one weak man and a million scattered units are alike unable to perform? On this subject it is well to ask what the annals of mankind have to tell us; how the governing class is recruited and under what conditions its useful task is most successful? It will be found that modern 'democracy' does not stand in this respect quite so well as men generally suppose.

Part II.  
Britain's  
tradition,  
protective  
and  
tutelary.

After a rapid enquiry into older systems, hieratic or feudal, of this *protective* or *tutelary* rule, we come to a closer survey of the present state of Britain. The former section may be said to embrace the problems of any commonwealth, when an attempt is made to throw off the traditions of conquest, foreignness, and centralism, remodel as a unit under the influence of democratic sentiment, and revert in practice to the brotherly feeling of the old kindred State. In the development of the United Kingdom there are special features, some of which have been briefly noticed at the outset. There is, besides, a heavy heritage of 'Protection,' of tutelary and patro-

nizing methods. At a very early period the conquering class (with some few exceptions) settled down to live on friendly terms with their dependents. At the time of Magna Charta it is asserted that the barons represented the general interest of the freemen, and were careful, in company with some selfish demands, to safeguard the rights of the ordinary citizen. The whole system of the Church was tutelary, according to the conceptions of the age, and enjoined on those who would be 'perfect,' a life wholly spent between 'social service' and prayer. How often both these ideals failed is a matter of knowledge, but the ideal itself was never lost and never denied. Thus the new functions of the State are not only thrust upon us by its immediate needs, but form part of an ancient tradition, the Christian care and supervision of the less privileged classes by their superiors.

It is then pointed out that this amateur charity, when organized and made uniform by State-action, changes its entire character. It is concerned almost wholly to-day with material rather than spiritual needs: for the belief is current that the moral attitude is the effect of physical surroundings, and that to influence the 'soul' you must first take care of the body. It is shown that this control of individuals once started and approved can know no limits; and that if the State assumes the aspect of a benefit Society, the closest attention will be given to the qualifications for admittance: those who are to share all the advantages of this gigantic system of Protection cannot expect membership for the mere asking. To make it easy would lead to rapid bankruptcy in the State resources; and the whole tendency towards a simpler life for all classes must end in diminishing the great reserve-funds of modern Capitalism. There can no longer be an open asylum for aliens on sentimental grounds: questions connected with the age of marriage, the birth-rate, eugenics, the limitation of the

Tutelage  
to-day  
wholly  
secular.

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family, restraint of the criminal and insane, become at once matters of immediate State-concern.

Respect  
for actual  
rulers  
obsolete.

Further emphasis is laid upon the lack of respect for rulers in the present day ; or the damage done to certain classes by a campaign of ridicule, which must have speedy effect in an age too restless to come to any but hasty conclusions and second-hand verdicts. It is to be noticed that at a time when Government is supremely *necessary*, it has become supremely *unpopular*. If its functions are to be indefinitely increased, it must at any cost recover its forfeited prestige. To do this the Central Government must divest itself of its partisan character and once more stand for the whole, for the matters not of contention, but of general agreement and respect. It must get rid of certain evil aspects ; honours bestowed for mere party-service, the crushing of minorities, and the like ; above all, the cynical application of the maxim : *Salus Reipublicae suprema Lex*. The friends of freedom and progress must give up their impatience and accept democracy with much more candour and honesty. Liberty does not mean an 'intellectual minority,' cajoling or coercing, or even coaxing an inert mass. The people must be persuaded and converted, and encouraged to stand alone, not forced or kept in leading-strings. Again, it will be needful to define clearly to whom and to what extent the larger or more 'imperial' powers of government can safely be entrusted. In this highly protective commonwealth, who are to administer ? Finally, it is urged that a rigid uniformity, except in the barest minimum of national taxes, police, justice, defence, is the last thing to be desired in a healthy state, built up of diverse elements. Reflection and religion have long been urging a man to think for himself, to be his own centre, to create his own fortunes, to work out his own salvation. The whole tendency of the political and humanitarian enlightenment set in the same direction,

New  
State-  
powers  
therefore  
inopportune.

Evil of  
Central  
Official-  
ism :



during the long and restless era of political enfranchisement. The suppression of individuality, whether of race or unit, cannot possibly be the last word in democratic government. Indeed, it is ruled out *ex hypothesi*; for democracy can only be effective at all in very small and really homogeneous areas, the classical city or the Swiss canton. Centralism (in every detail) is a mischievous legacy of post-Reformation Absolutism: it deifies uniform method and inculcates regimental exactness; it applies to every detail a formal procedure which is only in place in the barest minimum of State-duties named above. The British Isles are not a unity, and cannot be made so without violence to racial and religious feeling. Each part deserves and can claim equitable treatment and free development; it would be folly to assert that the same rules should apply with equal force to the artisan of the northern towns, the working class in London, the Welsh peasant, the Highlander, the labourer of Suffolk, of Sutherland, or of Connemara. It is not merely the congestion of business in a helpless Parliament and overworked Cabinet that demands this extensive system of Devolution. It is an act of common justice and of common wisdom, which no real believer in the 'People' can any longer withhold. Otherwise, democracy will always remain what it is to-day, an empty imposture, disguising absolute government in an anonymous and peculiarly distasteful form; as precarious in tenure as the older despotisms, and far less dignified, continuous and efficient in its policy.

Decay of  
auto-  
nomy.

Incapa-  
city of the  
Com-  
mons.

It is the aim of 'democracy,' conceived as an ideal, to encourage direct interest in matters which all can understand, to make better and more responsible citizens by inviting and arousing this concern. There are, and must be, in an artificial State struggling with foreign competitors, very real limits to the *competence of amateurs*. There are still, as in ancient Rome, *arcana imperii*, into

True aim  
of De-  
mocracy;

its limits.

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which the average citizen cannot penetrate, however intelligent. The Cabinet, like the Venetian Council of Ten, still conducts its business with closed doors, no minute-book, and the utmost secrecy. But it is carrying the despotism of a benevolent autocrat too far to include in this 'regimentation from above' nearly every interest of human life, to frame general schemes for regions, races and creeds the most different, to add to the statutes a host of measures hastily carried through a tired or silenced assembly, and lacking any sort of direct *imprimatur* from the classes whose welfare they chiefly concern. Are they not judges? has their opinion no value? If so, there is no such thing as democracy as a form of government; it is only a vague sentiment, secretly exploited by the clever, the interested, and the visionary.

Limited  
compe-  
tence of  
People on  
graver  
issues.

It must be acknowledged with regret that the exigencies of the modern State do not allow consultation of the people on the graver moral issues which suddenly arise. The State is still to the outer world an army, governed by expert generals with full powers, and within its ranks demanding implicit obedience. It must be prepared for a crisis, for an ultimatum. In present times there is no leisure for asking the people at large (who in the end have to bear the strain and pay the cost) whether they willingly undertake a war or can justify the claims it enforces to their moral sense. Even with our rapid spread of news, by the time they understand the crisis, it is already too late to draw back. The old absolutism recognized this and staked everything on the one resolute brain and strong right hand. It swept away the ineffective Estates, that criticized or counted expense or started endless debate on trivial points, when the time for action had come. To-day the modern State, however free its form, cannot do otherwise. Yet it is frank and politic to tell the people candidly that within certain departments amateur citizens must yield to the expert as

the private to the general and his staff. They must find scope and material for liberty in other spheres, not less important, if less 'imperial.'

With this needful restriction of the interest, the knowledge, the intervention of the average man, it is a pity, that the modern passion for Absolutism should have in effect closed for him the most innocent paths of free choice. At the time when both parties in the State were giving (as they thought honestly) freedom of debate and settlement to the provinces by County and Parish Councils, it was becoming more and more clear that business and decision were receding to the metropolis. It must be the aim of all to restore, by some means nearer and more palpable than the quadriennial vote for a central assembly, the waning interest in public affairs, and the diminished self-confidence of the voter. Every discovery of science which reduces the old limits of time or space, and the isolation of districts, tells against democracy and in favour of State-absolutism. Much of this effect is inevitable; we cannot recall, it is to be feared, the rapidly shifting village life to the old days when small yeomen met and managed affairs which concerned them in the Court-Baron, inheriting traditions, rights and precedents from quite remote forefathers. In spite of all the newspapers, we cannot give back to the workman, engaged for a lifetime on some infinitesimal fraction of mechanism, the real independence of the old home-worker. We find it hard to conceive the revival of those personal relations of master and apprentice, of employer and employed, which could perhaps only exist when the world was simpler and larger, and a district or a factory more of an autonomous unity. All relations, save those between State and individual, are being weakened; between parent and child, owner and tenant, landlord and farmer. Most of us regret but cannot stop the process of disintegration.

Needless  
curtail-  
ment of  
self-gov-  
ernment.

Local ties  
and rela-  
tions  
weakened.



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Evils of  
*Elected*  
rulers.

It is all the more needful, that, if a large measure of local rights and franchise be allowed, the central executive should be strong and respected. That must imply (to any thinking student of history in our own time) that it *cannot be elective*, at least by any method yet known to us. The fallacy of the Grace of Election is one seemingly indurate in the modern mind. Yet any one who supports it for a responsible government (not for the small duties of a vestry or parish council) must be challenged to answer the following questions. Is it not true that (with rare exceptions) all elective methods tend to a partizan result, in which a nominal majority, often a real minority of voters, usurp for a time the entire power of the community? <sup>1</sup> Is the average nominee honoured as a rule with the genuine trust of his constituents? Does not the very fact of canvass and party-feeling, narrow (and perhaps accidental) majorities, make the delegate insecure of his own place, and doubtful of the real sympathies of the place he represents? Does Government, by 'unicameral' assembly, elected by universal vote, seem to work out at greater freedom, rather than greater dependence on a few able and determined men in power?

Where  
'freedom',  
possible.

The writer will, no doubt, be charged as an advocate of reaction and obscurantism. He has no such purpose in view. He wishes, in an age of singularly confused thinking, intermingled issues and ambiguous terms, to divide the area of genuine from that of fictitious freedom. There are some things which the people can be trusted, even at the risk of mistakes and failure, to manage for themselves; from this province they are as a rule somewhat oddly excluded. In matters of 'high policy,' incidence of *national* taxes, of crises demanding secrecy

<sup>1</sup> It is calculated that all the early Governments of the Third Republic in France were sent up by an actual minority of the total electorate; since 1890, however, there have been fewer abstentions and a more general interest.

and expedition, the people can neither claim nor exercise control. Yet the central body, who have to decide on these points, is mixed up with petty controversies, and divided by party feeling; whilst all the time the fiction is upheld against the facts that the people are speaking in 'unmistakable accents through their representatives.' But on how many occasions do even these selected spokesmen have any genuine chance of giving their opinion, singly or collectively, on the greater issues?

It is, then, suggested that the Sovereign, resuming New duties for King and Upper House on Imperial lines. his place at the Council-board, should form with his ministers, chosen for imperial purpose from all parties, the central and permanent brain of the realm. The present moment has also appeared auspicious for enlarging the Upper House, still the more weighty and respected branch of the legislature, by the admission of life-members from the United Kingdom, the Colonies, the Dominions, India, and its vassal States. To say that such a scheme cannot be applied to existing conditions is to deny, once and for all, the possible harmony of *imperium* and *libertas*. It is to turn the back on the one promising form of government to-day, Federalism: to load the Mother-country with an undue proportion of the cost of imperial defence, because she is reluctant to admit her children to her councils and burdens. Meantime, objections to the clothing of Monarchs with direct authority are answered (so far as they can be) by the simple fact that whether they hold power or not they are held accountable for good government by the people at large. Privilege, divided from active and responsible duties, was the ruin of the French *noblesse*, and the chief political incentive to the most disastrous and reactionary event in Western history. How long is it supposed that a calculating and thrifty nation would tolerate the surviving dignity, even of the most revered dynasty, if they really believed the polite fiction that the Sovereign is a figure-head and a nonentity? A

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European monarch can never become a Mikado except at his own peril. No revolution ever swept away a king who knew his own mind and was not afraid to come to a decision.

The Peers:  
value of  
Hereditv.

Bound up with this belief in the unique function of Royalty is a plea for Hereditv in the transmission of high principles and methods of public service. Modern wealth, the obvious prizes of office, and the arrival in public life of well-paid capacity from other classes, has to some extent robbed the Peers as an order of their chief inducement to public duties. As in other countries there arises a temptation (new in England) for the noble to withdraw himself from functions in which he feels himself superfluous or superseded. Many services, once informally performed by the titled or gentle families, are now performed by expensive agents of the State, to whom this is not an episode of citizenship and a duty of *status*, but the great business of life, a livelihood. Travel and pleasure detach from intimate relation with the people many excellent men, who, in other days, would have been contented with a quiet country life at the head of a provincial society. But with all this change it seems clear that under the surface of our turbulent public life the Peerage as a class is still the most trusted, and the best respected of all. Their position and untarnished name is still a great national asset. In the decay of partizan government, in the new emphasis on imperial interests, in the increasing desire to give back life and freedom to the provinces, they are bound to recover much of the influence that falls away, to our surprise so rapidly, from the people's own chosen representatives.

To-day  
worst and  
least  
trusted  
factors  
driven to  
the front.

Such in brief outline is the argument of the present book. It is not meant as a *tour-de-force* or as a paradox. It is not the work of one who is attached by tradition to any of the two (or perhaps three) great parties who contest power to-day. It represents the conviction of a



student of human nature and human history, on whom is forced a grave sense of national peril, wasted resources, and suspended energy. Public life is marked by growing bitterness; or else (which is worse) by an increasing hypocrisy which simulates it. The chief factors which command confidence and respect are kept unduly in the background. Foreign envy and domestic feuds make all serious men anxious as to the future, as to our means of confronting any sudden crisis. It is no part for the idealist or the scholar to give in detail the precise lines or results of the suggested reform. The student must remember his limits; he has a true function if he is content to use it modestly. The practical statesman in the rough and tumble of the political fight has very little time to reflect on ultimate ideals. It is not presumed to dictate what should be the exact means of establishing local Parliaments for Ireland, for Ulster (if need be), for Wales, Scotland, and England. The contention is that politics must be brought nearer home to us, that local prejudice and racial pride must be fostered and directed, not suppressed, that minorities, whether of rich or poor, must find justice. Else there can be no State; certainly there can be no democracy. To do this we must carefully distinguish the permanent principles of government, the expert handling of the duties of an executive, from all those affairs, which properly fall into the contentious or provincial sphere: in these the people of one district and one class have as much right to their opinion as their neighbours or the central government itself. If for the greater and more dignified issues of imperial moment, we ask a wider use of the precious and undoubted prestige of Monarchy, it is not that we are mere students of a past, full of monarchical lessons, but that we claim to discern and interpret a certain trait in our national spirit, a certain penitent return to the value of personal relations. Let it not be supposed that the writer is sanguine as to

'Im-  
perium et  
Libertas.'

Expert  
and  
amateur  
duties.

Cassan-  
dra!

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the result. The serious feature in modern time is the opportunism, the avowed helplessness of our public men. Should but one be aroused by this small book to the need and possibility of Reform on a genuine scale, the writer will be more than repaid.

## PART I

### ORIGIN AND MATERIAL ENDS OF THE STATE

#### A.—THE IDEA IN DEVELOPMENT SINCE THE BARBARIAN INVASIONS (500-1800)

It is held by enquirers into the early rudiments of moral feeling that questions of *origin* do not prejudice judgments of *value*: in simpler language, that from a very ignoble seed may spring very lofty and beautiful plants; that man, even if descended from apes, is nature's masterpiece; that the conscience, even if an inherited and physical scruple or a growth of pure selfishness, is still our best guide in life; that religion, even if based on dreams and terror, has still some permanent use for mankind. This comforting assurance helps us not a little when we come to the State,—whether (as some prefer to-day) we identify it with the whole people, that which used rather to be termed society, or limit it in a better and stricter usage to the government for the time being. For the modern State can boast no splendid or heroic origin. When St. Augustine called great kingdoms *magna latrocinia* he was strictly within the truth. The clan-village and its extension the classical city-state, is an association of kindred; the members are united by common ancestry, common religion. Moral sanctions prevail; there is no police or coercive power to enforce decisions; men obey because 'it is right' or because 'it has always been so.' Custom holds sway, a blend of personal and communal interest,—for the individual at such a social stage cannot be conceived or conceive

Humble  
origins  
of the  
modern  
State.

1. The  
State as  
kindred-  
group.



No room  
for the  
Indi-  
vidual,

himself, except as a wholly dependent member of a group. The group makes the unit and bestows on it all its somewhat limited wealth of life, attributes and duties. In himself, an individual is nothing. Sense of personality is a late, a necessary, and a dangerous growth. But the unit has no feeling of oppression. Custom may be king but it is not yet a tyrant. Prescription is at least never an alien power, imposing commands from outside with the sanction of force. It is doubtful if its restraints chafe. Exacting as it is and minutely vigilant, it is the sole condition of freedom and life for its child. He is not deprived by it of personal rights, solitary musing, moral initiative; rather he suffers no loss because he is incapable of these. It fills and covers and directs all his waking and sleeping moments; he is never alone, never unsupported by its invisible guidance. The savage has no privacy, and could not use or enjoy it if he had.

no ele-  
ments of  
'progress,'

Such a community is narrow, prejudiced and intolerant. It cannot conceive novelty or it would hate it. Of wider claims outside the sphere of kinship it has no idea. War it avoids as much as possible, indeed any collision with neighbours. There is within it no seed of future development, no guarantee of further growth. Within the bosom of the society (that is of the State), there is as yet no alien element to irritate and stir from within to fresh movements. There is no advance, and no motive for advance, to more complex conditions of life. It is begging the question to call this forward movement 'progress' if we imply thereby some moral approval or appreciation. But whatever meaning we give to 'progress,' it will not be found here: there is no incentive to this infinite pilgrimage towards a dimly-conceived ideal. In spite of slight changes, Mongolian nomads and Australian tribes must have continued thousands of years in one state. Isolated and complacent, there is no constraint or irritant within or without to act as a spur.

This primitive state of unreflecting justice and morality, very different to Hobbes' imagined riot of individualism, gives way before *injustice*, or the rule and interest of the stronger, which is the foundation of the new and wider State. Yet the king who comes as a conqueror is after all the first 'liberal'; and the inroad of the dominant caste, which will form an aristocracy over serfs, is the first step in the attainment of freedom, as it is the first condition of a higher culture.

The modern State in Europe is in general the creature of conquest, and its first founders were freebooters. Of this statement no denial is forthcoming. The exceptions are few. Switzerland may seem to have a nobler origin in the defiance of a foreign ruler by native and self-sufficing communities. San Marino and Andorra are without doubt genuine survivals of a rudimentary State. Monaco, at the first view, affords us the spectacle of a lord ruling among the tenants and kindred he protects by full consent: but it is the creation of a family of acknowledged pirates. The robber-baron or robber-knight of the Middle Ages is a key to the whole development of the more dignified States in wider measure. He is only despised when brigandage is on too petty a scale to be magnificent. Even in 'republics' whose boast is freedom, there are commonly to be found traces of two distinct strata of society, the noble caste of freemen, and the serf or original inmate of the district. On this productive and pacific class, a military and unproductive race has imposed itself. We are now no longer deceived, like historians up to very recent days, by the claims of 'republics' to represent 'freedom': their freedom, being as in some of the United States until the Abolition, merely the strict maintenance of privilege. It strikes the reader to-day as grotesque to praise the Senate of the Roman Republic as defenders of the holy cause of liberty. We know now that they stood only for exclusive-

2. King-ship and the new (artificial) State.

Two classes, protective and productive.

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ness and caste-rights, for license to plunder. Thus, if there is 'exploitation' even in communities which to the unwary observer have the guise of free groups, it is still more the case when a military chief and his friends intrude as settlers on the land of disfranchised yeomen.

All  
modern  
States  
from King  
and Band.

Such is the origin then of the greater modern States; the pressure of hunger or foes upon a still simple and vigorous race, the formation of 'bands' under a trusted leader, the seizure of a rich tract where refinement has weakened or depraved the inhabitants, the compromise between a protectorate and the mastership of slaves. Sometimes lands are carefully divided on a principle with some regard to the interests of the former owners. In any case, it is not long before this dual State of a higher and a lower caste settles down into peaceful intercourse. The king while he takes his soldiers from the dominant class to which he himself belongs, prefers to choose his agents and ministers from the conquered race. The later monarchic central power represents the nemesis of the dispossessed people. The king's foes are their foes—the local baron, the robber-knight, the whole pretensions of the feudal hierarchy. No movement in history had more emphatic popular approval than the new absolute claims of the State which emerged from the welter of Feudalism. Still, while the king, then as always sought to destroy privilege, monopoly and abuse of power, it is clear that the subject-class as a whole, did not count the cost, and were whole-hearted in their allegiance. Delivered from 'many masters,' they were strong and sincere in their defence of the sovereign's prerogative, and to a much larger extent than is supposed, have ever since remained so.

Notion of  
Kingship  
purified,

becomes  
leader of  
'liberal'  
move-  
ment.

Thus the *quondam* bandit-chief has become the patron and trusted protector of the defenceless flock. Henceforward, his and the communal interests cannot be separated. For one case in which a dynastic marriage



has hampered a country or plunged it into profitless war, we have ten instances in which a nation's peace and safety depend on kinship and affinities in high places. The old nobility, actual or artificial descendants of the king's 'comrades' at the time of the inroad, have been reduced to the rank of subject, adorned with unmeaning titles, and rewarded for docility with posts at court. They receive with good or bad grace the altered state of things. In countries where they have retained their power, little advance is made towards securing equal treatment for all citizens. The western States of Europe accept the new principle of secular autocracy,—curious amalgam of Roman imperial tradition and the new doctrine of the German Reformers, that the civil power as such was sacred and heaven-sent. But in east and north the State was still without a strong hand at the centre. National history became a see-saw between the great families, jealous of each other, and only united to oppose any efficient central unity. In Russia alone, driven on by disgraceful memories of a foreign dominion, was the royal power exalted over a people who, either through indifference or servility did not resent a master. Only in autocratic countries where the king had drawn to himself all authority was the stirring of a self-conscious national life to be seen. The people in the regions ruled by nobles remained serfs, and attained only a dull parochial consciousness. Royalty, as if by some concerted plan, put in practice at the same moment all the doctrines which Liberalism afterwards formulated; and handed down to the democrat and the doctrinaire those lessons of State-supremacy for which they cannot be said to show any adequate gratitude (1660-1789).

Progress  
in West  
under  
Monarchy.

Monarchy  
chief  
effective  
source of  
Liberal-  
ism.

In this age freedom meant equal right, if at the same time it also meant equal regimentation. Even after the French Revolution, the people hardly felt aggrieved at the far heavier demands of the new 'tyrannies,' because

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Popular  
welcome  
of its  
claim.

'career was now opened to the talents,' and no privilege marked out a certain caste from the common clay. Among those who welcomed the strengthening of authority were the merchant, the lawyer, and for a long time the thinker; only the churchman regretted the old 'dyarchy,' and the balance of secular power by a spiritual and moral force. It may be doubted whether the nobles, now courtiers, sighed for the old forms of particularism, any more than the Daimios of Japan (1869) really regretted their sacrifice of provincial dignity and duties. It was clear to every reflecting mind that freedom only became possible for the average man when the king's writ ran everywhere, and the reins were grasped by one determined to keep every one else in due place. Did not the emancipation of the unit, and the increase of prerogative go hand in hand under the Roman Empire? Was it altogether a paradox that the Stoics, intent on private rights and really careless of larger issues, should have become prime ministers and tutors to an absolute ruler? or that Christianity from the very first should have accepted Cæsar with joy, and appealed gladly to his tribunal? Did not the advanced reformers in the eighteenth century hail the advent and employ the power of enlightened kings like Frederic and Catharine? To-day Liberal and Socialist excuse the increase of measures which appear coercive on the quite logical ground that before you can talk of freedom you must level men to a uniform obedience: the wage-earner, for instance, is only 'free to contract' by an abuse of language, a transparent euphemism. Since the abolition of a slavery which at least gave a value, he is strictly only 'free' to starve. Without ample safeguards, such titular liberty is a pure mockery.

Central  
power  
could  
alone set  
unit free.

Old  
freedom=  
'privilege'  
of a few.

Nothing could show an intenser contrast than the ancient and modern use of this term liberty. It cannot be too often asserted that in its old sense it implied

*privilege*, a relic of the exclusiveness of the tribe and the clan. But neither usage implies freedom from restraint. It has been of late pointed out that the freedom of the citizen, as independence from galling custom and routine and as scope for personality, was very much increased, when the small Eastern village or classic state fell under a 'despotic' monarchy so called. Personal life began to throw off its shackles just at the moment when a distant control lessened the strain of perpetual supervision near at home. The monarchy of Alexander had perhaps hastened, as it certainly accompanied, the great outburst of the subjective spirit. Under such an ideal of government, the Benthamite maxim could for the first time be realized, 'Every man to count for one and *no one* for more than one.' The old cumbrous 'representative' method of the *patrocinium*, in Rome for instance, had enabled strangers and foreign cities to obtain recognition and a hearing through a citizen: this was now exchanged for a direct relation to the State, such as we have in modern times. The intermediate steps were abolished; the immune and the exempt and exceptional was carefully ruled out; and absolute power (so called) arose like a towering pillar to overshadow a now level plain.

The imperial prerogative, to which Roman jurists hastened to give unheard-of scope and divine importance, was never arbitrary; rather it was the end and the negation of arbitrariness. The picturesque details of Caesar-madness still, it is to be feared, represent the sum-total of many students' knowledge. But these insane interludes were rare and brief, and not half as public and familiar to contemporaries as the breezy and scandalous chronicler has made them to us. It was really believed that the popular will was incarnate in the emperor, who might be of any rank and any race. The revived autocracy (after 1500) was, however, strictly

Subjectivism and Autocracy allied against it.

Autocracy, condition of orderly government.



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dynastic: the doctrine of Divine Right was evolved as a counterpoise to the papal claims. No doubt there appears to us an element of caprice, and a ring of arbitrariness in such words as Star-Chamber, Ship-money, prerogative and passive obedience. But we cannot forget how stubborn was the resistance made by short-sighted men, in support of their ideal of freedom, to the most indispensable powers of a central government,—powers which to-day no ‘republic’ would for a moment dream of laying aside. This is clear from the whole history of rebellion in the Stuart epoch. The entire trend of Monarchy towards State-absolutism has been till recently the subject of acute misrepresentation. Only to-day are we beginning to deal justly with the authors of the modern State. It is open to any believer in the full autonomy of smaller areas to impeach the whole policy; but the worst offenders against local freedom, the worst oppressors of minorities, have never been monarchs—rather those plebeian governments, which holding up the idea of royalty to scorn and hatred, have in truth modelled on it their powers, their policy, and their demeanour.

(Stuart epoch misunderstood.)

Monarchy, though useful, created purely artificial State.

At the same time, valuable as some may consider the part played by Monarchy in setting the individual citizen free, we must repeat that the State they created is to the present moment, *artificial* and *unnatural*. When theorists speak of the State as something sacred and sufficing, they do not mean the central government for the time being, but the complex of social laws and customs, which is above the reach of a king’s tyranny or the meddling of legislators. They mean the country and the land of one’s birth, with its history and its religion, the public opinion they have formed, the national character they have moulded. Kings may by conquest or diplomacy annex province after province, but they cannot create a unity. Judged by this test, Ireland and Wales (and perhaps

Scotland as well) are only by accident, not by sentiment and sympathy, parts of our empire. When they look back on their past, and upon the methods by which they were incorporated, almost every incident of which we are proud seems their shame. The failure and the weakness of the modern State is that in trying to centralize and make one, deep-seated differences of race and creed have been neglected or driven underground to work mischief in secret. It is quite possible that such differences are to-day forgotten in the purely commercial and industrial rivalries of a material age. Yet there are not wanting signs that the old idealist fires are not quite extinct. Meantime, let us not forget that in speaking of the modern State, we are dealing with the arbitrary, the accidental, the precarious; with a congeries of parts, roughly thrown together, pronounced a unity, and treated as an organism with a common aim and a common life,—a view which seems the incurable fallacy of statesman and theorist alike.

Particularism  
not yet  
extinct.

It will thus be seen that the chief work of the new Monarchy was to set free the individual while charging himself to some extent with his welfare: to sum up in a political unity neighbours of the most diverse character and temperament, speak in their name, and attempt to give them a single consciousness. The old divisions, after the entrance of the Teutonic nations, were still tribal; a man carried about with him and in his own person the law of his race: where he lived was a matter of indifference. Next came the era of royal patronage, in which princes, without interfering with local habits and methods of rule, beyond a needful *minimum*, became protectors of various districts widely remote from each other and united solely by this tie of common suzerainty. The modern State, which we may imagine assuming 'personality' (if at all) about the year 1500, became impatient of this hopeless lack of uniformity. It set

Unifying  
work of  
Monarchy.

itself the task of attaining territorial integrity at home, while it fostered by its colonies an expansive imperialism. The feudal system in which the prince might be the head of a dozen petty states, each with its separate constitution, at least favoured national or departmental franchise. When a stricter uniformity prevailed, the individual was, as we saw, set free, and when he reflected, became an amiable cosmopolitan. But beneath this seeming liberty of thought and person were stifled many local hopes and aspirations; and this deep feeling has not been silenced or satisfied by the popular methods of government to-day.

Monarchy  
set unit  
free and  
made  
cosmo-  
politan.

That the individual in becoming 'free,' should become cosmopolitan, and (to a large extent) renounce a narrow nationalism, is worthy of note. The Roman Church in the Middle Ages always resisted abuse of worldly power and local prejudice. It provided a constant current of fresh air, kept always open channels of free intercourse, avenues of promotion for the humble. It laid constant stress on something higher and ampler than mere national life. It gently thwarted the growth of separatism and nationality, like the older empire of Cæsar. It spoke of Christendom as a whole, as a *substance*, of the pope-ruled empire as an integral, of the nations as subjects and as *accidents*. The creation of nationalism by the kings was a defiance to this ideal, and it was the monarchs who succeeded. But, in re-absorbing the powers hitherto scattered over a hundred petty centres, they started a new cosmopolitanism. Men of intellect had a common fatherland, the 'republic of letters.' Although they became more sedentary than the restless student-pilgrim of the scholastic Age, they had no country. The Enlightenment of the eighteenth century was not national but European; and its aim was, no doubt, the disappearance of the purely national governments which at that time made



so poor a show. It was, as we know, the pride of Frenchmen driven to despair, and, later, the hate of Napoleon felt by the nations merged against their will in his empire, that produced once more a popular movement. This abruptly ended the visions of *idéologues* who had dreamt of a single human brotherhood. Since then cosmopolitanism has been either the asylum of intellect driven from practical politics in the nineteenth century, or the ideal of the more generous workmen. Yet it is clear that modern Socialism cannot, as at present formulated, live together with 'Internationalist' sympathies.

These  
dreams  
and ideals  
shattered  
by the Re-  
volution.

## B.—VARIOUS DEFINITIONS OF THE STATE

It is now time to aid our notions of the State by the use of certain analogies which will explain its basic idea at different times. The State passes through the following phases : it is first a *family* or *kindred* ; next a *flock*, a *patrimony*, an *army*, an *organism*, a *co-operative association* or *society* for mutual benefit. (For the present we are putting out of sight the religious sanction which in many times and peoples lies behind the conception ; in general it may be said to lose influence at the moment when the *family* passes into the *flock*.) The earliest stage is well known ; the civil body is continuous with kindred.

1. State as family.

2. As flock under alien shepherd.

The first empire transforms this community of equal kinsmen into a *flock* ; whether by violent conquest, or by assuming patronage over foreign tribes, who seek aid in troubled times from stronger neighbours of their own accord. This is the earliest instance of the *contractual* State. The duties of ruler and subject are, perhaps, ill understood and roughly carried out, but there is a tacit covenant as between a shepherd and the flock which he feeds both to his own profit and for their safety. A more individual form of this is seen in *patrimonialism*—a term applied to monarchies where power is the appanage of a certain family, and the subject-class are both in person and estate entirely at the mercy of rulers : that is, in theory ; for in practice despotic government has as many checks as a popular Cabinet, though they are of a different kind. A Turkish sultan learnt when his vizier

lost favour with the people by bonfires and arson in the suburbs; and this was the recognized channel of a constitutional protest which could not safely be disregarded. The bark of autocracy is far more terrifying than its bite; as in any other form of rule, its chief aim is to stand well with its subjects. Even the Meroving line (under whom France was cut up again and again, and parcelled out to satisfy the demand of jealous brothers) did not seriously impair the old Roman law and traditions. Feudal kingship was largely patrimonial; and the idea still survives in the smaller German States which have clung obstinately to autonomy under the *landesvater*.

To this there succeeds the modern notion of the competitive State (since 1500), when the king really becomes the Chief Servant of the public. The sole axiom of statecraft was *suprema lex salus reipublicae* (for which two latter words at that time *regis voluntas* became a very fair equivalent). In place of a church-state in which the civil power was only the Church's executive, jealously supervised, a conception arose which likened a human group to an *army*, or, in more modern parlance, to an *organism*. The welfare of the whole, without too curious respect to the rights of units, now becomes the end; not the training of individuals for another life, but the survival of the group in this. It is not too much to say that in this new and scientific conception, every spiritual idea tended to vanish, every implication of statecraft with a moral aim. Even where rulers were honestly preoccupied in the subjects' welfare, ethical restraint was shaken off for all foreign relations. While theorists in the study write books about the gradual moralizing of the State, it is a modern age that can show the most cynical disregard of pledge and treaty, that can make profit most frankly out of the domestic troubles or careless ease of a neighbour.

3. Competitive State as army.



In (2)  
rulers are  
*patrons*,

in (3)  
generals  
of army.

'Nations,'  
the  
work of  
*foreign*  
kings,

In the first group, *kindred*, rulers and ruled are really identical. The distinction is an artificial one; the father or eldest is trustee for all the members. There are no violent sanctions, for the restraint of law is purely moral and customary. In our second stage, of *patronage* by a foreigner, there is the most complete severance between the two classes. Labour and function is specialized; each party needs the other; the productive class (or flock) works in part for itself, in part for its masters of alien birth who guarantee public order, and a discreet modicum of disinterested justice. This protective caste does not itself produce. Sometimes it preys unduly upon the producer. But for the time being, it is the sole condition of production: without it, only petty bickerings, local envies, above all unrelieved servitude of the mass. In our third stage, the European State after 1500, there is an odd medley of principles: divine right openly preached and legally defended; yet in the background the purely utilitarian and worldly interests of the Commonwealth, which for the time found in kings its best, perhaps its only spokesmen. It is, therefore, a compromise between old and new:—the sovereign reigns by right of lineage and in virtue of a divine mandate, but he is really the head of a business concern which needs an alert, perhaps unscrupulous manager. Some of the worst men have been good sovereigns, and the failure of amiable virtue on the throne has almost passed into a proverb. Underneath all the outward pomp and deference, it is clear there is a cool understanding of contract. There are many reasons (no less cogent to-day) why the son of an ancient and foreign house of conquerors should be the best representative of the motley patchwork called a 'nation' and a State. At any rate the modern nation is the creature and the work of royalty, and of nothing else in the world. May we go even a step further and say it is the creature of a *foreign* royalty, and that in

most cases no home influences could possibly have effected a union?

Thus the State in the last period is by turns expressed as an *army*, an *organism*, a *business concern*. It must be strong to resist attack from other competing rivals; therefore there is equality and a soldier's discipline in the ranks. The first reform of the new ruler is to supersede the incapable classes of old privilege and employ merit wherever found. This democratic principle was adopted in Islam long before it was cautiously admitted in the West: the continuance of the Turks in Europe is due to the Christian janissaries, the non-Turk viziers and other renegade advisers of the Sultan. This denial and overthrow of mere birthright was the chief service of modern kingship in the eyes of liberal and enlightened men. To what lengths against the exempt orders, clergy and nobles, Monarchy (still itself passing by descent) was prepared to go, is seen in the history of pre-Revolutionary Europe. Everywhere kings and statesmen were in the van of progress; indeed, many like Catharine and Joseph of Austria, and the courts which expelled the Jesuits, went much too fast for their people.

So true is it that democracy is apt to be conservative and lacking in enterprise, that 'reform' has always been the work of 'intellectual minorities.'<sup>1</sup> It was Frederic II. of Prussia who spoke with the most dangerous frankness of the elective, representative, and utilitarian character of kingship. While exerting the power of a despot or a generalissimo, he disclaimed all Divine right or patrimonial interest. He was just the manager, the first servant of the State; and this State, in the increase of armaments and of a national militia, became in its foreign relations purely an army, and passed under a permanent condition of siege and martial law.

<sup>1</sup> Mrs. Philip Snowden, Albert Hall, February 23rd, 1912, speaking in favour of Woman's Suffrage.

## 4. Organism.

This integration not always whole-some or final.

While thus fighting for its life, the State might also be called by the more scientific an *organism*,—with one law and duty, Spinoza's *in suo esse perseverare*, to prove itself the fittest by survival. Modern thought and discovery has reinforced this simile. Sermonizing historians of the State speak of it as an association for the furtherance of justice and right—a realm of spiritual ends. Actual practice recognizes but a single law. Strictly a patent fallacy is involved (as we saw) in this zealous patriotism. A centre has been quite artificially created; and the varying monads or units have been brought to look up to this centre which has made itself their focus or ganglion. But this assumption of central power is often an insolence or an injury, as in the abolition of a free Irish parliament in 1800. The organism has slowly awakened to consciousness. Yet there is no guarantee that this process, born of a few able and determined men, has always proceeded on the most lasting or most wholesome lines: unless, that is, we are prepared with Hegel to canonize the actual and believe with Pope, that 'whatever is, is right.' In the often shapeless and accidental congeries, there are suppressed centres of national, racial, religious, and artistic life which have suffered from this hasty acceptance of the organism-simile; an error which we find in the answer of Asinius Gallus to the offended Tiberius, *unum esse reipublicae corpus atque unius animo regendum*.<sup>1</sup> But who constituted the body politic, and breathed into its nostrils the breath of life? We can afford to be grateful on many points to the vigorous and partizan monarchs who stepped forward on the failure of the Empire and the Church of Christendom (as an ideal unity of believers and brothers). They filled a gap and made their own interests to tally with the good of the new unit they created. But we must refuse to

<sup>1</sup> Tacitus, *Ann.*, i. 12.



accept<sup>1</sup> as a destined and heaven-sent compact their precise delimitation of territory, as a final settlement in defiance of local franchise and racial protest. Even the last boon of victorious royalty, united Italy, has all the strained uniformity of the older method.

The last and most general notion of the State is that of a *business corporation*, an association of equal individuals to secure an aim only attainable in common. Herein the foreman and the manager, the director and the auditor, rise to their place by proved merit. The sole end is the best use of resources, the development of efficiency. The aim is not individual happiness, certainly not individual freedom; but corporate vigour. If we secure the due balance and the active working of every part, the abstract personality of the State will be great, and (by incident) the several members will each in their way do well. The body corporate will hold its own in the world-struggle, and the citizens, apart from it and in themselves nothing, will lead the best lives possible for them.

It is, then, under these similes that the being of the State is most often suggested to us. It is not surprising that its demands have been more exacting, its vigilance intensified, its methods more coercive. It intervenes in matters where the 'arbitrary despotism' of the East would not have dared to intrude. It possesses and exerts without scruple powers far greater than that of the

5. State as business-concern,

with new duties and vigilance.

<sup>1</sup> At the same time it must be noted that the mischief kings have done by centralizing can be cured only by kings. No one who could witness the Investiture, at Carnarvon, of a Prince of Wales will doubt this. We have a Royal Viceroy in Canada; the whole tendency of Indian reform must lead to a similar establishment in that Empire. Ireland, profoundly loyal and personal in temper, seems to demand an object for its loyalty. The spirit of Party will fight long no doubt against a proposal which sets apart the highest places from contention or the best prizes from competition. To each vassal or equal state must be despatched a genuine, and not a fictitious, representative of Royalty. And if the Empire, for good or evil, is to hold together, the sacrifice must be made by the parties at the earliest possible moment.

Bourbons. And as the reason of primitive monarchy is to be found in the needs of a migrant tribe under march, so it is the competition of races and peoples that has centred such unheard-of authority in the modern cabinet, and armed it with all the discoveries of science. The State in a word, however free may be the forms of government, is stronger and (in effect) more irresponsible than at any earlier time.

Summary. Our first task is now finished ; and the various phases of human society are before us. The earliest form is alone truly natural and instinctive ; moral (in its strict sense), and needing no police within, all its sons being soldiers without. There is no specialism : every one (except the very aged) is everything by turns : progress and extension and change are unimaginable. Upon this village or city comes a foreign power, asking only levy and tribute. In return it provides more effective defenders, the expert profession of arms, a sovereign and central court of appeal to decide causes in which the ruling race have no personal bias beyond the general maintenance of order. It was at this stage that *freedom* (in our modern sense) began ; the direct product of 'despotism,' or alien mastery. Then first talent found an open career ; narrow prejudice and caste were broken down. In the Western world the cosmopolitan unity thus created was first the Roman Empire, and next Christendom, still under two purely moral directors, the unarmed pope and emperor. The one destroyed the other, and the victorious papacy was in truth the victim. Smaller groups emerged into vigorous life : and Machiavelli, dynastic monarchs, and the German Reformers joined in consecrating a new local and territorial power. In the new State-force, use and necessity supplanted moral appeal and Christian purpose. In place of a single, but not oppressive unity, there arose a number of purely competing organisms. While we prate of the predomin-

The State  
demora-  
lized and  
become  
Secularist.

ance of Civil over Military, *cedunt arma togae*, the sword is really the last arbiter, and the resources of science are in the hands of an unlimited executive. The only lesson that China has learnt from us, or is likely to learn, is the need of physical training and military discipline, the dignity of the once despised soldiers' trade. Human society does not (as once was idly supposed) begin in war. But in its latest and present phase it has drifted into a state of veiled but permanent hostility.



## C.—SPIRITUAL AND MORAL AIMS OF THE STATE

### DIFFICULTY OF ENTRUSTING THESE (IF ACKNOWLEDGED AT ALL) TO A COMPETITIVE SYSTEM

Plea for  
loftier  
concep-  
tion of  
the State.

IN the above survey (it will be objected with seeming justice), the State has been identified with an alien and usurping rule, careless of the moral life of the citizens, careless of their welfare, except as sheep led forth for slaughter or shearing. Is not the State, the sacred fellowship of men in brotherly intercourse, something far higher and nobler?

It has already been noted that the exact meaning of State is to-day highly ambiguous; it ought no doubt to mean the *brotherhood*, the whole Society; in effect it, as a rule, suggests a *Government* with which perhaps half a people finds itself in strong hostility. It is often hopeless to decide which use it is intended to convey: in the same debate the word hovers uncertainly, and passes without warning from one meaning to the other. It is now proposed to ask what are the strictly *moral* foundations, on which our human intercourse is built, the enduring elements which no government, for the time being, could venture to attack. What is the origin of the appeal to the average mind of law, country, tradition, loyalty? Hitherto we have looked at government as an alien and usurper from without, often gladly accepted and made welcome, but only for advantage, and, like the Manchus of China, dismissed at short notice when their work is done. It would be a pity to confuse the State

and Government; and yet, at the present hour, it is difficult in the extreme to avoid such a confusion.

We need not go back to the rudiments of law in the kindred societies with which history may be said to start. It is enough to ask whence a modern world has derived its more or less permanent and undisputed code. The answer is obvious, from the Christian religion and from the Church; which gathered up and preserved the belief of the East, the culture and thought of Greece, the law of Rome. The modern world cannot disown its parentage; it is still unmistakably the child of the Middle Ages. That which has come down to us from the classical peoples has come through the Church, and has been tinged and coloured in the passage. The common agreement in society as to moral practice is due to this influence alone. The barbarians, entering the empire not as primitive communities, but as heterogeneous hordes of raiders and outlaws, had lost principle and cohesion and initiative. They had become purely receptive, and the Church had in them very apt pupils. While a State of some sort founds itself by instinct, and builds up, without conscious design, some plan of law and custom (be it only a robber-band's code of honour), the actual form and idea of human society came direct from the Church, and indirectly from Christian and imperial Rome. Hence the emphasis on unity, on moral and central control—in itself of no slight value in a violent age.

Against this ideal of a world-wide church-State, holding subjects and petty rulers alike in tutelage, the spirit of *humanism* made protest long before the revival of learning disclosed the new standards and fresh ideals of the classical Republics. Men craved for a fuller and more variegated life; intellect wished to be free; statecraft was cramped by moral restraints and fears of clerical censure. The nature of the new ideal is clearly seen in its rejection of Christian methods. The first

Social  
code (not  
State-law)  
based on  
Church  
teaching.

Individualism of  
Renaissance  
a protest  
against  
this  
tutelage.

enlightenment had no humanitarian or democratic bias. The signal types are the cosmopolitan and, perhaps, dissolute scholar; and the tyrant, quite in the archaic form. In the Middle Ages the churchly ideal was the one bulwark against a wild and visionary communism on the people's part, and a reign of intolerable selfishness on the part of the petty ruler. In both cases it exerted a wise control, distrusted private inspirations and apocalyptic dreams, and demanded from rulers a recognition of common moral laws.<sup>1</sup>

General  
principles  
in national  
life,  
Christian.

The principles on which the ordinary life of a nation proceeds are still Christian. The home, education, commerce, general intercourse, justice, professional duties—are still largely guided by rules which assuredly we have never learnt from any teachings of the State. The Church has been the Gamaliel of the civil power. Public opinion still judges men and measures according to old standards which it would often be puzzled to justify. Still vaguely germinating in the mind of most men is the conception of the commonwealth as a brotherhood of Christian men and women, set in this world to live together and help each other while preparing for the next. Where faith has grown dim, the old sympathies are nevertheless still strong. Nothing is more common than to find moral conviction becoming more intense in the decay of belief. It is not (as is often thought) that atheism is more strict, and that religion has been all along the secret foe of good conduct. It is rather the *testimonium animae naturaliter Christianae*. The earnest reformer who loves his kind—a type not so frequent as some suppose—is without knowing it a 'pensioner on

<sup>1</sup> It is an irony that many people to-day judge the papacy and its public service by the popes of the tenth century, when it was seized outright by a feudal house, and by those of the fifteenth, when it reflected all the evils of the Renaissance in a cultured and ironical individualism, perilous in any ruler, but quite disastrous for the spiritual arbiter of Christendom.



the past'; and if he puts aside the sanctions and the promises of religion he can never rid himself (even if he tried) of its practical influence and inspiration. Though he claims to be original and free, he is in truth always a member and a pupil of a great religious society. He can never forget its lessons, though he may throw off its livery with disgust.

It is likely, therefore, that many men, when they speak with trust or affection of the State, and desire to give it wider powers, are thinking neither of an actual government, nor of average human nature, but of an idealized tutelary class. Such a class seems to have held an unselfish authority in Egypt and in India, among the Iberian or megalithic peoples and in the Middle Ages. Plato believed this type, half-soldier, half-monk, wholly ascetic and disinterested, to be the best guardians of a city. The Knights of Malta, or the Teutonic Orders, are instances in point,—a union of chivalry and personal virtue, making the priest-knight brave, gentle, generous, and protective. It is clear that reformers to-day hope that such a class might be re-discovered, recruited from all ranks by desert alone, and armed with large powers. When they frame detailed accounts of an ideal State, it is really the Platonic 'guardian' that they have in mind, the whole picture softened by Christian influence and some slight moral and mental reservation. With this is no doubt combined in all writers on 'Utopia,' from Bacon to Wells, a vast knowledge and wise use of natural facts: it is not enough in Plato to know *the idea of good*, and seek final causes in everything, but the ruler must know science, the complex system of nature and the effect of environment on man. Yet, after all, the staple of the ideal portrait is Mediæval; and we repeat that as the rules governing society are Christian, so the character of the ideal guardian has been derived from the best types of Churchmen.

Society  
guided by  
unselfish  
tutelary  
class.

Doubts as to aim of State; supersede itself or enlarge its scope?

Will the State always present a distinction between rulers and ruled, sovereign, person or body, and subjects? No precise answer will perhaps be forthcoming, but the attitude to human freedom must be fixed by the form of the answer. Is the aim of the State as *government* to supersede itself, render itself superfluous, enable the subject-class so fully to appropriate the motives, methods and principles of life that there will be no longer need for officials, ministers or police? This is the end dreamt of by those who would reduce government to a *minimum* and supplant precise legislation by public spirit and complete individual freedom. In the idealized Germany of Tacitus, *boni mores plus valent quam alibi bonae leges*. St. Paul, for detailed rules or prohibitions would briefly comprehend all a Christian's various duties in one simple law of love.

Government from outside (contractual).

We have seen clearly that the State in its second and most common phase is always an imposition from outside; whether accepted by a silent compact, actually invoked to end quarrels at home, or frankly thrust as a yoke on a conquered people, is matter of indifference. Italian towns of set purpose chose as ruler one, who, as a foreigner and holding on a brief tenure, could have no possible interest or bias in the settlement of disputes. The Russian Slavs (according to an old tradition since verified) once invited a warlike handful of Norsemen to form over the network of Slavonic villages a central government, now developed into the Czardom and bureaucracy of to-day. When the academic question of the social contract is raised, it is well to remember that the State in this limited sense of central governance is nearly always the outcome of a covenant, an agreement, well enough understood by the two contracting parties. All feudalism, however violent its infancy, is founded on such a covenant: the vassal may transfer his allegiance from a master who can no longer defend him.

It is the very essence of family life and a domestic sway of father or elder that there is no compact. Right and reciprocal duties are well enough understood, but there is no explicit agreement in the very nature of the case, because this implies a distinction of spheres, where interference is, or is not, permitted. This severance marks the whole notion of power in India. There the State (as external governance) has always been something foreign, not indigenous; it has had no influence, has endeavoured to exert no influence, on the real customs, creed or thought of the people, settled from time immemorial. Even the axiom familiar from the time of Strabo that the 'soil belongs to the king' is merely a polite fiction; it belongs to the communal village or the owner by right of 'first clearing.' The formula was invented to account by a show of equity for the tribute which every victorious class or dynasty must impose on the producers within their sphere of control. But if the land might, by a harmless turn of speech, be called the sovereign's property, this could not be said of the traditions, laws, and religion of the little communities, detached and self-sufficing. Over these the most absolute king did not venture to claim the control of a modern republic. This was outside his province, outside his contract. Over his slaves or his ministers he had power, just as a Roman emperor over his soldiers or freedmen; but prudence in both cases compelled respect for the unwritten law of tribes, the custom of inheritance, and the taboo of caste. It is said by Juvenal, of Domitian, with an insight unusual in the Roman satirist, *hoc nocuit Lamiarum caede madenti*. A despot may rage against noble victims with impunity; but he risks throne and life if he touch the rights of the poor.

No contract in the family.

Limited sphere of primitive Autocracy.

The question of supreme moment to-day is whether the State has overcome this foreignness or *dualism*, State as government



still alien  
and  
dualistic.

inherent in all but the simplest forms of family or tribal rule? In the freest nations does the average citizen feel himself one with the government, a genuine member of the State, having a real share and voice in its management? It must frankly be said that this is not so, and it is never likely to be so: unless democracy is applied within limited areas where, as in village community or classical City-state (the ideal both of Aristotle and of Rousseau), direct personal interest is possible. Elsewhere, 'popular' government is a travesty, and the power at the artificial centre will neither represent the whole, nor even a part, with any accuracy. Here once again the belief in 'intellectual minorities' amongst nominal advocates of the people must raise doubts as to their logic or their sincerity. The healthy attitude is that of the Irish peasant, to be 'against the Government' whatever party be in. And although in England there is but little trace of foreign dominion, as in Ireland, very few men identify themselves so closely with the government, as for instance Tocqueville believed to be the case in the United States of his day. The policeman in England is no doubt a more popular figure than the more brusque and peremptory official on the continent; in the hue-and-cry after a criminal we are supposed to aid, our neighbours to hinder, the pursuit of authority. But the police stand to us not for changing issues of partizan tactics and the ministry in office, but for public order and public sentiment, the *boni mores* on which all respectable citizens are in agreement; the non-contentious routine of a settled State, about which there can be no two opinions.

The reticence, indifference, or self-restraint of the older despotism will explain even to a prejudiced liberal, the favour it found in the eyes of its subjects. It was often honestly alien, and in some matters harsh and uncertain. But it knew its place, confined its 'arbi-

trary' caprice (so called) within narrow limits, and left the average man much freer than before to work out his own salvation. It prevented the incessant friction of quarrel and feud in a free State, so often mistaken for a sure sign of health and vitality. Men might never forget its usurped powers, its foreign origin; but by a very human compromise between master and servant, the two settled down to live together. How is it that intruding landlords (as in Ireland at one period) have within a few generations been accepted by an 'oppressed and evicted people' as their rightful lords and representatives? Will it be denied that as a class these intruders are far more popular than a freely elected house of representatives? Is it a paradox to the student of human nature to say that landlords' claims (if not absentees) are less resented than the control of the House of Commons or the rules of a County Council for allotments? The point suggested is, not that a *foreign* absolutism is the best form of government, but that abstract writers are mistaken who believe that it is always more tolerable than an *indigenous*, and therefore partizan, control.

Sup-  
planters  
of aris-  
tocracy  
unpopu-  
lar.

It need hardly be said that here is the very problem at issue, when it is proposed to extend the control and the competence of the State. A free government (it has been discovered) does not as yet mean government by universal consent. Except in the non-contentious sphere there is no such thing as the 'will of the people.' To the half of any nation under free institutions, either the party in power is distasteful, or the entire form of rule. The old city-states accepted a foreign master sometimes with surprising alacrity, because they were tired of faction and preferred to serve a stranger rather than neighbours, equals, or inferiors at home. The French winegrowers in the recent strike showed the same spirit when, with half-serious disloyalty, they raised the German flag and called upon the Kaiser to come over and

Danger in  
giving  
new  
rights  
over  
freedom  
to  
*parvenus*  
and  
partizans.

help them. This feeling was one secret of Napoleon's astonishing success, not merely in the field, but in the mind of the peoples on whom he imposed laws. Again, it will be seen that the Italian cities were wise in their generation, and that the ideal ruler or rather umpire is often a foreigner. The real danger to modern peoples is not that the general will is thwarted by privilege, but that there is in every State a smouldering civil war: this must become more acute when the government of the hour charges itself with ampler functions, or passes protective measures for one or other class. In the most orderly states this civil war will only be marked by alternate victories of the Right or the Left, the 'swing of the pendulum.' But it cannot be pretended that all the subjects acquiesce either in the form or the measures of the administration, because a certain majority have voted for the delegates in parliament. Democracy is indeed put out of court by its own professed advocates, when these refuse to consult it on any definite measures, style universal suffrage (in a referendum) an 'organ of plutocracy and privilege,' and limit popular control to a quadriennial choice between two persons on a hopeless jumble of national and local issues. Such a perversion of the old ideas of freedom, of the old hopes of wide personal interest in politics, cannot satisfy any real friend of the people. The pleas raised to-day by more advanced statesmen amount to an apology for the *philosopher-king*, for a ministry of all the talents with unlimited power, for cabinet autocracy—in the end, it is to be feared, for a military dictator.

Fallacy of  
'philosopher-  
king' and  
'intellectual  
minorities.'

Why should not (it will be asked) the most able and competent receive a mandate to reform the State? The answer is simple, because this is not freedom or free development,—the only thing of abiding value as religion and philosophy and human sympathy teach. All the arguments against the benevolent despot apply with

Mischief  
of competition and



equal, if not greater, force to the unlimited control of <sup>ability as</sup> brilliant and exceptional men, of supreme officials <sup>test of</sup> carefully trained as overseers of the people. The Athenian democracy used the oyster-shell against a too powerful citizen. A modern people does not altogether trust in cleverness, even though for a moment it may consent to profit by it. Ability is not, and should not, be a passport to popular favour.<sup>1</sup> One ideal of the French Enlightenment was probably to preserve the forms of autocracy, but to dictate its policy according to the laws of Reason and of Nature (then assumed to be in complete harmony). At the first real crisis in the Revolution, the sages and thinkers lost all grasp on affairs, or on the popular mind. Napoleon was justified in his dislike of the *idéologues*. The ominous symptom to-day is not that the people claim to govern themselves, which, if a genuine wish, would be a sign of health; but rather that clever men claim absolute power to act in the people's name. Here, in a new and deceptive form, is the old fallacy that the best government would be that of the exceptional man; to whom, Aristotle said (either in irony or foreboding), the citizens, acknowledging a superior, would surrender themselves unconditionally. So far from being the best form, this would probably be the worst of all. A mechanical and coerced perfection, imposed on automata from without, can never become an ideal, and has always in practice failed. The same argument then will apply to a threatened regimen of the 'intellectual minority.' For these men, useful only in the sphere of idealism, imagination, and suggestion, cannot be trusted to hurry a sluggish people on their *a priori* path of progress. There is as yet little sign that the foreignness of government, the dualism of ruler and ruled, has been as yet transcended in any higher unity or deeper sympathy.

<sup>1</sup> See my article on 'The Old System of Education,' *Oxford and Cambridge Review*, July, 1911.

Radicals  
do not  
propose to  
end, only  
to create  
a new,  
governing  
class.

A phrase is heard sometimes to-day which merits some notice in the light of our results up to the present: 'a governing class.' This seems to imply that certain men, presumably by birth, status, and race, are better qualified than others to take thought for the State, to administer and add to its laws. It is clear that modern reformers, even of an advanced type, do not contemplate any real increase of control by the average citizen, only a remodelling of this official 'class' on new lines. We are not then concerned with refuting the old belief in the panacea of the vote. Events and the bitter complaints of Socialism have proved how very slight is the remedy of constitutional reform. It can do little (they think) to remove the ignorance of a people, who must be stirred to realize their power and claim their heritage, to understand their own misery, serfdom and 'wage-slavery.'

The  
result,  
not demo-  
cracy, but  
State-  
autocracy  
in the  
hands of a  
faction.

We are, therefore, not strictly interested in any question of the suffrage, whether it be extended or curtailed. The sole point at issue is the type of man who is to play a genuine part in the new State-autocracy, to which national insecurity, industrialism, and mechanical invention have given such ample powers. The West seems on the point of accepting the Chinese principle. It would be matter for reflection, if China learnt militarism from our world, and gave us in exchange the perilous axioms of competition and ability as the sole test of a ruler.

#### D.—‘A GOVERNING CLASS’

THE older cultures of Nile and Euphrates, somewhat later of the Yellow River and the Ganges, rested on a *hieratic* class. The kings of Egypt and Babylon were notoriously representative and executive of a policy already clearly defined in the mind of priests. At first, priest and king were one; the *patesi* or ‘Melchizedek’ with whom human history really begins some 7000 years B.C. Later, the guardian of the temple or the wonder-maker and seer, was separated in province from the active warrior or official: these took their orders from a body of ‘capitular canons’ holding council in the temple. Specialism in function had become needful; the Christian apostles were soon constrained to divide off the active organizer of relief from the teacher. In Egypt, Babylon, and Aryan India it was to the supreme interest of the priesthood to invest their nominee and creature with a religious awe, with divine attributes. He was the child of the god, the chosen of heaven, sometimes in his own person a deity. The rite of inauguration was always strictly religious and conferred, not merely secular, but clerical power; just as to-day, our kings in assuming priestly vestments when they are crowned receive a semi-sacred character. It was only in the pure military rule of Assur that priestly influence was checked; because the aim was not culture or civilized life in a safe area, but booty and foreign conquest. But a priesthood which controlled all the sciences and arts of life (useful or otherwise) did in fact maintain control in the East down

Priest-hood as governing class.  
Babylon.  
Egypt.  
India.



to the spread of Hellenism. In India the Brahmins were careful to train the kings whom they wished to keep under tutelage, in the exercise of their power; they mapped out their time with rigid accuracy and formally allotted the moments of pleasure and recreation.

China  
an excep-  
tion,

It is likely that both in India and the river valleys of western Asia, the priestly caste represented the more cultured specimens of a dominant race. The Brahmin was an Aryan, who had perhaps learnt not a little from an earlier profession of wizards and soothsayers among the Dravidians,—just as the Celtic priesthood must have borrowed much of awful mystery, belief and ceremony from the ‘Iberian’ or megalithic hierarchy. We do not know the origin of Mesopotamian culture; but it seems now clear that Egypt was civilized and reduced to a uniform government by an intrusive aristocracy who entered from the south and by sea. It is also clear that China became a feudal monarchy under the guidance of an invading clan who had passed westwards (perhaps east carrying the traditions and faith of Chaldea) through Tarim Valley and Lobnor, to the bend of the Hoang-ho. Here the priestly caste was in truth patriarchal and there was little emphasis on mysterious powers or corporate character. The ruling class was composed of clan-chiefs or family-elders; and the simple worship was in their hands, as among the earliest Aryans, (who may have moved into the Indian peninsula much about the same time: at any rate the strict history of both nations, each with an obscure background and long preface of development, begins about 1000 B.C.).

It was China who alone, among peoples of the ancient world, discarded slavery as the basis of society, pronounced all men equal, multiplied to infinity the class of industrious yeomen, and on the overthrow of feudalism by a military despot (c. 210 B.C.) set up a purely democratic system in the choice of officials. At any rate, it

was then decided that birth counted for nothing under the autocratic First Emperor, who as representing the entire people, was the sole judge of competence. The later changes merely reduced the axiom to a working system. The Emperor judged by merit, and his favour was open to all: Kwangsu himself used to examine the applicants for the higher Degrees. The whole routine is then a curious blending of the *democratic* and *imperial*,—notions which are probably closely bound together, the one being strictly the complement and guarantee of the other. Under monarchic forms, the Chinese enjoyed a complete freedom, as a relief from the careful grading of feudal society. No race has so long been in the true meaning of the term, *sui juris*: and it is difficult to see what further franchise can accrue from the exile of the Manchus—a republic everywhere else means the triumph of sectional interests. As against every popular measure, charges of dishonesty are levelled at the choice of bureaucrats by a paper-work competition. It is needless to say, that the mass of the people, satisfied with the knowledge that a son of the humblest family may rise to the highest button, are in general content to leave government (as Hegel advises the Western world) to the circle of officials. The step from feudalism to State-supremacy, taken by China over 2000 years ago, was also taken by Japan within our own memory; when a real democratic protest in favour of equality and union was made under a nominal loyalty to the Mikado. In all essentials the two movements correspond; and that which is taking place under our eyes to-day illustrates the policy and the success of Tsin-Hwang-Ti.

Asia should not be left without a word upon *Lamaism*, which has, in a curious fashion, superseded the native Mongolian patriarchate. Here, amongst a people, in early times singularly careless of forms of worship, and blind to the advantages of a professional

a democratic hierarchy based on personal capacity.

Mongolian  
Lamaism:

priesthood, has grown up a 'governing caste,' who rule by spiritual influence among the nomads of the north, and the settled inmates of Tibet. Buddhism, itself an anti-clerical movement, has oddly enough adopted all the features of hierarchic rule,—borrowing more, it may be safely conjectured, from Nestorians and Manichæans than from their old enemies the Brahmins. But spiritual merit is personal, and does not depend on birth. There is no caste; and the peculiar method of choosing a chief Lama rests upon an absolute indifference to all class-distinctions: a belief which puts all the more power in the hands of the existing hierarchy.—In Persia, fire-worship with its mysterious 'magian' priests, preserved its importance right down to the Moslem inroad (c. 650); thus, if we place 'Zoroaster' about 1000 B.C., the supremacy of the national cult under a national priestly caste lasted nearly 1700 years. The inhabitants of Asia show, therefore, a peculiar tendency to accept the control of a hierarchy: everywhere it is stirring, except where Islam has brought in the Protestant idea of equality, except where China, under stress of inward turmoil and the influence of strong central State-autocracy, invented a competitive system, leaving open to the poorest the door of office and social advancement. Amongst the Nomads, priestcraft wielded by a tutelary caste had within the last five centuries reduced to milder manners the once redoubtable raiders of Europe.

The  
Druids  
and  
Catholic  
priests.

In the West the Druids, certainly not Celtic in origin or belief, handed down the ideas of prehistoric culture, and, like the Catholic priesthood in Mediæval times, provided whatever basis there was of nationality. The ranks of both were open to tested merit; and the two systems were democratic in the truest sense. The Church only failed, when through no fault of its own, its use was paralyzed and its mechanism seized by the feudal element. Between these two powerful epochs of tutelage



the classical ideal interposed an interval of protest and reaction. It is well known that the Greeks and Romans were so far modern in spirit that no priestly profession existed in the exacter sense. The duties of religion, belonged, as in the earliest Aryan household, to the head of the family or the magistrate who succeeded him when the group enlarged. Here there was no tutelary class from the spiritual point of view. Yet it is notorious that in secular matters (and to some extent in religion) the system of patronage grew up to supplement the inefficacy and hopelessly narrow sympathies of the State. But this was a *private* system, not a *national* institution; and really bears no true resemblance to the phenomenon which we are treating.

When the classical spirit revived at the Renaissance and idealized the institutions, virtues and even vices of the ancients, Catholic tutelage and censure was voted out-of-date and intolerable; the cosmopolitan standards of Humanism have been already noticed.

Liberty in this age meant merely the privilege of a few,—and could not be a universal goal. The refined philosophers did not trouble themselves about the 'weaker brother.' They were quite ready to allow the priest to civilize him so far as he could by 'religious imposture.' 'If there were not a God,' (said Voltaire with truth) 'we should have to invent one.' Meantime the old powers had passed into new hands; the swarm of royal officials gradually increasing, bureaucrats and emissaries of the centre. The life-devotion of the priest for the good of others, had given way before the professional and routine duties of employment to-day. Such service is well-paid, perhaps over-paid; it is (at least in theory) open to all, and is highly attractive. But will it be contended that the nation at large has altogether benefited by the change? Is not government still something alien and unsympathetic?

Individualism protests against tutelage.

The Enlightenment (Liberalism) not genuinely democratic.

Summary. We have now surveyed the origins of the body politic, the ideas and covenants underlying the changes made in the unifying process. We have seen that to a large extent the old spiritual aim has been superseded by utilitarian motives and material ends. We have seen that the unities created by monarchical will in response to a certain mandate from society, are largely artificial, in some cases unnatural, in no instance really sacrosanct and inviolable. We have noted in them the seeds of dissent and disruption. We have seen how gladly the modern State, little altered from the absolutism which Machiavelli taught and kingship put in practice, borrowed these extensive (but to it inappropriate) powers. We saw a devoted and tutelary class. We have noted the almost universal sway of tutelars, armed at first with spiritual, next with civil power; except in the small and brief republics of Greece and Rome. Human nature has not been able to dispense with such a caste set apart for supervision. We have seen the Catholic priesthood and friars, an admirable instance of such a caste, set aside along with the many masters of Feudalism, and supplanted by a busy group of royal servants, who have developed into the overgrown bureaucracies of our time. We have seen the gradual extension of central claims; and new functions thrust upon the executive. We have found that in this change the spiritual, indeed the moral, character of the State (in spite of some empty professions or pedantic theory) has entirely evaporated. It is bound up and implicated in contentious matter; and we have noted that at the moment when the State is supremely *necessary* it is also supremely *unpopular*. It is now time to apply these general facts to the condition of our own country.

The State  
demora-  
lized  
just when  
most  
active,

unpopu-  
lar when  
most  
necessary.

## PART II

### THE STATE AND GOVERNMENT IN BRITAIN

#### E.—OUR PECULIAR DISADVANTAGES

##### PREFACE

BRITAIN, for all its innate conservatism, labours under several distinct disadvantages, which might easily make it more unstable and incalculable in politics than many more excitable countries. It is ruled by Party-government, that is, not by that which inspires confidence and respect, but by that which is frankly sectional and parades all the fever and animosity peculiar to a partizan. That this attitude is often artificial, a mere pose or feint of a combatant, makes it not less, but more, mischievous. The people, seeing government losing dignity, straightforwardness, and self-restraint, are made accustomed to a perpetual state of civil war. This attitude is reflected to-day in every social relation. Nowhere in the world is there more pleasant intercourse between high and low, rich and poor, wherever they can meet in person rather than by delegates. And yet it is this nation which stands on the brink of a social upheaval, a truceless warfare of classes and interests. That this curious result is in a measure due to the partizan character and violent invective of our parliamentary system, cannot be doubted.

Evils of Britain.

1. Partizan ran cour.

The *second* disadvantage is the precarious and irresponsible condition of the 'people' of Great Britain. In no country is the permanent element of the workers so aloof and detached from any real stake or interest.

2. Servile condition of the masses.



## 54 NEW GOVERNMENT FOR BRITISH EMPIRE

As persons they are in theory free, as workers they are dependent. As voters or strikers they are omnipotent; as individuals they are at the mercy of employers, whether on the land or in the factory. They have had the suffrage for a quarter of a century; they are thoroughly alert and discontented. The compliments or platitudes of the hustings sound in their ears an intentional mockery. They are landless wage-earners, employed not by persons but by corporations, dealing but indirectly with masters through managers raised above them from their own class: and where in history has such a system ever worked? It is always the self-made man, the *parvenu*, the *plebeian* aristocracy of Rome or of England to-day, that keeps the classes apart, and traduces each to the other. A plebeian aristocracy of wealth after the unhappy model proposed by the younger Pitt, has all the faults of a 'middleman' or 'factor' for an absentee landlord: if on a small scale he brought discontent to Ireland in the past, why on a larger scale should he be harmless to-day? It will soon be discovered that the people can understand a responsible and respected governing class based on birth and tradition, public service, and the natural sympathies. A government by wealthy upstarts, 'captains of labour,' a Venetian oligarchy, has never been acceptable to the masses, or encouraged their confidence.

Extinction of popular freedom from 1760.

The actual extinction of a free people, the yeomen, dates from the moment of agitation for the reform of Parliament. When statesmen like the Duke of Richmond and Gordon, or the younger Pitt, were busy with proposals to extend political power in the nation, a large section were gradually forfeiting all right to be called citizens, because they were losing all stake in the country. The Reform movement, delayed by the terrifying example of French anarchy, was in truth a step further in the suppression of a once free class: it took effect purely in the

interest of the employer and capitalist. If the condition of the worker was improved and safeguarded in the following years, no thanks were due either to the principles or the practice of the party in power. Bright and Cobden opposed the Factory Acts. With the last Reform Bill, 'emancipation' was nearly complete in the *political* field, and just stopped short of Adult Suffrage. At the same moment the *social* development was complete which made the worker dependent. The government of the country was handed over, not to citizens, but to wage-earners.<sup>1</sup> The people, so often reminded by both parties that their will is supreme, are to a large extent aliens and sojourners in the land of their birth, without real ties or attachment, except in a very few favoured areas. Let those who resent the term used by the Socialist, 'wage-slavery,' ask themselves seriously whether they can disprove the fact. In spite of much personal sympathy and good feeling, can any one say honestly we have brought together the 'Two Nations' of which Lord Beaconsfield speaks in 'Sybil,' during the seventy years or so since he wrote?

Farce of  
political  
franchise.

This is a state of things which no lover of country can see without concern, no historian without the most profound misgivings. A mechanical age, which has in the last lifetime made more changes than the last thousand years, cannot, it is true, be guided by the lessons of the past. Trade, world-commerce, rapid intercourse and the annihilation of distance, have together removed all the old landmarks; stultified most of the old principles; as Mr. Bodley has so wisely remarked. The fall of idealism, a restless but superficial public opinion, pursuit of material and selfish ends, the reduction of politics to a competition in bribery, the idleness and detachment of the rich, the toil and detachment (in

Can the  
past guide  
us to-day?

<sup>1</sup> See two articles, *Oxford and Cambridge Review*, Aug. and Sept., 1912: "Citizenship, Ancient and Modern."

another sense) of the poor,—all these are common features of civilized society throughout the world. Many are entirely novel and have no counterpart in former ages. The Social Revolution, it is said, will take on other phases; and the past can be no guide. While fully admitting this general truth, the writer must urge that as yet human nature has not greatly altered, and that certain broad symptoms tell us infallibly of the decay of a nation's life. It may be said with assurance that where government is frankly partizan, where the subject-class has drifted away from most of the rights and calls of citizenship, the outlook is quite as gloomy to-day as in the age of Gracchus, Marius, or Catiline.

Will the  
vote be  
used for  
social  
revolu-  
tion?

The government of an empire is to-day in the control of those who only possess this barren, yet formidable, right of suffrage. Can it surprise us, that, with the awakening sense of loss and injury, the vote is used to coerce the administrative and secure better terms for the individual, helpless in himself and strong only in association? When the miners have won in their present conflict, will the universal demand for similar terms be long delayed? Will our 'industrial system stand the strain'? will not unemployment increase to an alarming extent by this artificial fixing of prices and wages by an absolute government forced into action by popular pressure? Can those who have suffered in the past, and suffer no less now because of the glaring contrast of riches and want, be expected to value those national and imperial ideals which (as they are taught by their leaders to think) have caused all their misery? What will be the state of public feeling or the public defence, if an enemy were to declare war? Hitherto, all ranks have closed up, all disputes have been forgotten when a crisis threatened. Can we feel as confident about the future? War comes nowadays with no flourish of trumpets



or solemn protest, but with a secret attack in a carefully selected moment of weakness. Will a challenge find us united?

A *third* feature might be added, which causes dis-  
quiet to many; the entire absence of respect for authority  
(with one or two striking exceptions). No one could  
hear unmoved loud cries of 'liar,' 'traitor,' 'hypocrite,'  
aimed at the Chancellor of the Exchequer in the recent  
Female Suffrage meeting in the Albert Hall, in February,  
1912. With exceptional self-restraint and command of  
temper, Mr. Lloyd George continued his discourse to an  
audience, nominally in full agreement, amid a volley of  
abuse and pointless interruptions. Respect for the *persona*  
of authority, for the minister and official as such, is a  
moral force in a community, of which we can scarcely  
exaggerate the effect. When once weakened in the public  
eye by systematic rudeness or ridicule, it can never be  
recovered. But this natural respect for superiors seems  
to have vanished just at the moment when these superiors  
have become, in the fullest sense, the people's own  
choice, their direct nominees and representatives! There  
may, after all, be some truth in the old belief that the  
most popular government was that of impartial strangers,  
even if it be a dominant caste; that the most hated,  
certainly the most despised, officials, are natives elected to  
rule on the spot by their countrymen. Who can explain  
the strange yet unimpeachable fact that few public events  
have been so popular as the forcible closing of Parlia-  
ments by Cromwell and Napoleon?

3. Lack of  
respect for  
authority  
and laws.

To these symptoms of instability or disaffection may  
be added certain features, common perhaps at the moment  
to all 'civilized' and most barbarous States. The  
nobles, a class in the strict sense responsible, are disposed,  
like Achilles, to sulk in their tents. The people are  
loaded with opprobrious names by the party whom they  
refuse to return to power; and as all parties are agreed

Other  
general  
evils:  
(a) Retire-  
ment of  
nobles.

(b) Centralized officialdom.

(c) Sections of artificial State ruled against their will.

(d) Low tone of public life.

that politics is 'a simple process of counting heads,' this resentful and contemptuous air is neither dignified nor consistent. While these amateurs are flattered if they give support, power in a centralized State is diverted from the average citizen to experts and officials; gratuitous service is a thing of the past; charity and almsgiving, it may be said, have received a logical death-blow, (though, such is the natural sympathy of man and the temper of Englishmen, we shall for a long time to come continue to give and grumble). More and more nations or districts or departments are being governed against their will, because of the complexity and rivalry of interests; but also because of the overpressure of a government undertaking a greater burden than it can lift. Lastly, the whole tone of public life, its language and its invective, is on a lower level than that prevailing in ordinary ranks: society, even in the humblest orders, is more unselfish, more honest and more courteous. Even if we have not caught the tone of our rulers, such a public example must have influence; we are all in secret ashamed and disturbed at the phrases and arguments we hear and perhaps employ at a General Election. The truly refined and generous character seems (to judge by some recent instances) disqualified from a share in this public life.

Limited but still useful province of the student.

It is still presumed that study and research are of some practical value in throwing light on modern problems. If (as some say) our common nature is entirely transformed by recent mechanical discovery and appliance, it will still be wise to compare our own experience of men and motives with the results of research; to decide how far outside things can really corrupt or elevate. In any case, it is not for the privileged class of students to withhold any contributions of possible value from the common stock. These thoughts are offered then, partly because there is a certain dearth of

convinced apologists, partly because a cool and independent enquiry may be expected from those happily aloof from party strife. They can at least seek truth alone, can employ patience and leisure to examine or confront the facts.

It is possible that, owing to changes in the outward conditions and attractions of life, an entirely new era is opening for which the records and lessons of old time will have no clue. A central point in these pages will be an emphasis on the disappearance of principles. We are pensioners of the past, and are living on ideas which have lost their appeal, on a much worn vocabulary that does not stand closeness of definition. The zeal and passion of early reformers seem strangely antiquated. Though the words, *justice, humanity, freedom, the people's will, loyalty, love of country* are often on our lips, very few are bold enough even to ask what exactly they mean. Abstract writers, on the State for instance, speak as though the old moral ties and claims were still recognized; and, like Plato, please or stimulate us because their ideal is such an absolute contrast to the world of our everyday experience. But much harm may be done by refusing to see that terms are changing their sense, that motives are yielding to subtle and unsuspected solvents. It is foolish and wrong, in a conspiracy not of silence but of volubility, to repeat old catchwords and axioms as if an audience perfectly understood what the speaker certainly does not understand himself. It is the duty of the 'academic mind' to probe everything, even the most reverend ideals, and aim at truth alone.

The question must now arise in many minds whether there can be any constructive policy for the higher statesmanship, whether we are not doomed to drift with a current which carries us beyond our reckoning? Can human reflection help us when the tide is irresistible?

Impartial  
inquiry  
into first  
principles.

Have  
States-  
men any  
real in-  
fluence or  
positive  
convic-  
tions?



Has reason any positive function? Can it apply effective remedies? Is not its working limited to foretelling to the unbelievers like Cassandra before the event, and casting up the motives and causes of disaster when it has overtaken us? Perhaps some to-day are encouraged by thinking of the large store of goodwill and friendly personal intercourse and free speech, which must save any great social change from 'regrettable incidents.' But did not the French Revolution begin, not merely with an anxious and universal wish to save the State, but with the most sanguine hopes that it was possible? Were not the men with the best intentions, the most unselfish purpose, hurried along to ruin or to crime? The most mature students of history are struck by the *accidental*, not by the *predestined* character of their subject. Again and again, while solemnly setting forth (after the event) the causes which led on surely to their certain result, one meets a fact or a phrase, a personal incident of some kind, which had it happened otherwise must have changed the entire course of events. What might not have been our world-history had not an obscure centurion killed the blameless Emperor Maurice in 602, with his whole family? Or if Louis XVI. had been a sovereign of firmness and conviction? It is the supreme irony of Fate that puts so much power in the hands of those, who, even when they act, believe themselves helpless victims of destiny.

(Accident  
in his-  
tory.)

But (it may be asked) "in this uncertainty of human powers is not every government reduced to opportunism, watching like a stockbroker the next move of the restless market, not presuming to direct and content (in spite of all pretension) simply to follow? Its duties are defensive, not constructive; positive, not idealistic. A statesman is asked not for a theory of rules or of the State, but for tact and decision in 'doing the next thing.' It may even be criminal to look too far ahead." Of the

statesman this may perhaps be true; not of the scholar. Whatever the bias and error of his work or the vagueness which hangs round all Utopian construction, he owes it to a less leisurely world to show what his studies have to say of practical value. Nor will pure defence on the old lines continue to satisfy any one; the conserving party is lost if its whole policy is a negative clinging to forms that have lost their substance; phrases that have lost their meaning. If every institution stands in need of thorough overhauling, it is the *idéologue* who may in the first instance suggest. He may be revolutionary without actually subverting the constitution. And the true reformer is he who suggests what are the vital, what the worn-out elements or factors, in the body politic. He should not destroy root and branch, but he must ascertain whether there are still unexhausted resources upon which we may draw for a nation's welfare, and perhaps for the happiness of a world.

In this sense a 'conservative' may be party to a revolution. In a time of despondency and criticism, he is only anxious to make the most of these undeveloped resources. He will gladly abandon many shibboleths, if he can guard a valuable substance. He will not hesitate to expose many accepted fallacies and run counter, if need be, to all the supposed tendencies of the age. The pages which follow will contradict many of the dearest assumptions of the modern statesman or the modern writer; not from any spirit of wilful paradox but in a conviction that the onlooker can judge best of the game. The writer will not seek to minimize the entire difference of view; it will be no compromise that he offers. But in regard to motive and high principle he will never attack the champions of order and privilege, the advocates of personal and industrial liberty, the newer party whose practical interest in the welfare of concrete individuals must command universal sympathy. That much

The student may suggest policy or needed reform.

His aloofness from party-ties,

and his sympathy with all.

of the defensive of the first, the aggressive of the second, the new ideals and methods of the third are wrong, will not involve any condemnation of those, who by birth or principle or distressing experience have been consecrated to the national service.



## F.—THE NEW DUTIES OF THE STATE

To the future historian one of the strangest episodes in the development of thought and politics will appear the reaction against Absolutism and the unlimited powers of the State, that is, the Liberal movement of the last 200 years. To itself Monarchy had collected the various diffracted rays of power and prerogative; out of feudal chaos arose for good or ill the modern State. This monarchy was not always wise or efficient; it was least efficient when it was least personal. Very often it is seen to surrender its powers to a vizier, and reign without governing. This is everywhere the signal for discontent. Unhappily the monarch loves to employ the *parvenu*; and the people who will stand the tyranny of birthright will not tolerate the airs of an upstart or a clever empiric. In the eighteenth century amid much floating sentiment, this idea was predominant, that government even if it had served its turn, had aimed too high. The Laws of Nature and of Reason (believed to be in perfect accord) could be discovered by every rational being without dictation or coercion from above. The administrative sphere was to be reduced to its narrowest limits: and nature and spontaneous expansion would take its place. Such is the belief of the physiocrats, and of the older Liberalism.

With this state of feeling it is hard for us to-day to sympathize; constant legislation and revision of laws and ordinances seems of the very essence of good government. We may doubt if any party would have a chance

Curious  
interlude  
of Liberal-  
ism.

'State's  
duties to  
be re-  
duced to  
mini-  
mum.'

Their  
actual  
increase  
to-day.

of returning to power who frankly styled their policy the policy of inaction. Only after a serious public catastrophe would the motto 'Bonar Law and a quiet life' win popular favour. Every sign and symptom point to greater activity in the function of government. Rulers must intervene; the country, shrunk into small dimensions by new methods of intercourse and centralized control, looks expectantly at government action to cure all its ills. The eighteenth century hoped great things from the untrammelled working of Nature; it is not too much to say that the twentieth hopes everything from the most complete defiance of Nature's law. Huxley, in his 'Evolution and Ethics,' rang the death-knell of the complacent trust in Nature's benevolence. Reformers take as their text the superiority of *moral* to *natural* ordinances. The older Liberalism, *laissez-faire laissez-aller*, is everywhere extinct, and while the intervention of government is always to some extent resented, it is always at every crisis invited.

Wide  
powers of  
modern  
State,

but purely  
secular.

It may be said then that no department of life lies outside the range of this interference, outside the competence of the State. That religious belief is an exception is merely a sign that the State no longer prepares for the next world, but is content to provide for its members or citizens in this. In this withdrawal from all spiritual interests, the State has become very busy and vigilant in the more modest and purely secular area. It would not be unfair to add *moral* to *spiritual*, and say that from the State's point of view the broader issues have almost entirely vanished. The whole matter is now a question of economic readjustment. No great and inspiring ideals are now left for which to fight. To the great centripetal movements on the continent, as in Italy and Germany, has followed a time when the members and provinces are reckoning up the consequences and the cost with some dismay. The franchise is almost

universally bestowed (and it must be said, also cheapened and vulgarized). But the catchwords of Idealism have been almost banished from any reasoned exposition of policy, which is meant to convince, not to irritate.

The State is thus brought down to earth, and deals in the most *primitive* problems (food and wage, and health and education) by the most *artificial* and complex methods. That is the chief work of our age. It would be unfair to assert that the State as such has therefore no moral function, no ideal aim. Men have decided that its main duty is to make conditions and environment everywhere fit for the development of the human plants. It is foolish, as we know, to talk of liberty of contract and independent bargain between an employer who does not much care if he keeps his mill or mine open, and the workman who must accept his terms or starve. It is absurd to talk of an open career and freedom of opportunity for children brought up in the surroundings of the slums. Reformers are united in belief that physical health must precede spiritual advance. It is a mistake to suppose that the Socialist must needs be a materialist; he is exposing the wicked and complacent fallacies of those who claim credit for giving vote-freedom, while they take good care not to interfere with wage-slavery. It is this seeming hypocrisy which has brought the venerable Liberal movement into contempt, and led to reversal of all its favourite methods, to disbelief in all its favourite axioms. Socialism is not a wild leap in the dark after all; it is rather a reaction to a form of tutelage, against which the old-fashioned physiocrat and Liberal could not have found adequate language.

What has been the motive for this incessant activity of the State? Not the claim of abstract justice, or 'rights of man,' or freedom of the individual; but first and foremost, the proper use of human and economic material. The real cause of social reform is no doubt, to

Its task lies in the simplest problems.

Supposed hypocrisy of the Liberal movement.

State-action justified on business grounds.



the sympathetic mind, pity for the wastage and wreckage in human life, and a religious sense of duty to the weaker and disinherited. On this religious sentiment too much stress can hardly be laid; under cover of wild attack on a slothful Church or a too dogmatic creed, there is substantial agreement (at least in England) on the value of a brother's life and his immortal destiny. But the State, as a corporation, cannot justify its interference on these humane and transcendental grounds: although such a motive must really lie behind all the movement for improving the conditions of life and labour; must be really uppermost in the heart of the reformer, whilst with true English reserve he keeps sentiment and God-fearing philanthropy to himself. For the State the justification is to be found in the confessed peril of an ignorant proletariat, justly discontented with its lot, the folly and unwisdom of not turning to good account the human and material resources of our country. Thus the motives and outlook of the central government, as representing the State, must always in a wholesome community differ from those of its individual members. It would be as great a mischief to over-moralize the State, as to deny the purest disinterestedness and sympathy to its citizens. The State acts on motives of public utility, not on sentiment; the reverse is or should be the case for individual reformers. The one deals with law and the universal *ex hypothesi*; the others with the men and women they meet in daily life, and for whose welfare in the eyes of heaven they are in some degree responsible.

Danger  
of attempt  
to  
moralize  
modern  
State.

To avoid wastage and develop resources to the best,—such is the aim of all public action. The State took to itself the duty of educating the young out of the hands of parents and clergy,—the first great measure which showed the altered temper of the age, the more serious attitude to its burdens. If reformers thought that these concessions ended the State's duties to its poorer citizens,

Gradual  
assump-  
tion of

they were strangely mistaken; it was but the beginning of a movement of which even to-day we cannot see the end. It was discovered that you cannot teach empty stomachs and wet feet; food and boots were provided, not by wild Socialism, but by common sense. If education is compulsory, it must be real and worth having; and Sir John Gorst, with many others, has passed quite logically from Toryism to a sincere belief in the widest duties of Government. Free medical inspection would seem to follow as a matter of course; a recruit is disqualified for defective teeth; and intelligence is not to be expected from the anæmic or deformed. If all this enterprise was accompanied with a certain lessening of freedom, a certain increase in coercion and officialdom, it was only to be expected. For the older Liberal we fear the future shocks will be still more serious. There must be more encroachment, they will protest, on the once sacred rights of the individual to lead his own life, and find (or miss) his own happiness.

Will State-interest in children stop here? Surely not; at either end of school-life attention must be more and more intensified. Why should I speak of labour-exchanges and bureaux, of schemes of insurance, of workers' pensions, or all the hundred and one suggested remedies of unemployment and distress? They are familiar to all; and no party is without some share in this policy, without a panacea of its own. Such schemes are by turns the support and mainstay, or the thwarting and restraint of *personal* (even of *class*) freedom. Organizing, it is said, kills natural development, and takes away those obstacles which are the most valuable conditions of any genuine success in life. From a narrow circle we hear the disparaging words 'spoon-fed,' 'grand-motherly,' 'patriarchal,' 'new feudalism.' Yet turn these critics of the front Opposition Bench into ministers; they will be found vying with the rivals

care of the  
young.

No assign-  
able limits  
to such a  
policy.

they displace in masterfulness and intervention. Nor will this interest be confined to later life; it is bound to begin earlier than ever, to go back past school-days. In spite of Mr. Birrell's very natural dislike to the term 'Children of the State,' it is in this direction that we are tending.

State  
must go to  
root of  
matter.

It is absurd to suppose that a highly artificial, highly protected, highly supervised, community like the one in prospect, can be indifferent to the numbers and quality of its members. It has sometimes been thought (or left tacitly implied) that the new movement would never touch the sanctity of the home, the freedom of marriage, the independence of celibates, private choice in the extent of the family,—so far as this lies under human control. This is a pure mistake. You cannot put together two ideals so discrepant as State-authority in every department of life but one, and the most absolute liberty, if not license, accorded just in this one point to individuals. The State, when it becomes a benefit-society organized for the purpose of mutual aid, cannot afford to surrender control in this respect. We cannot conceive a Druids' or Buffaloes' club guaranteeing sickness pay or pensions or funeral-costs, without demanding an entrance fee, and medical test, and regular subscriptions. Nothing is more clear than this; not sentiment (even religious sentiment), but business and common sense must run the new State.

Senti-  
ment and  
moral  
feeling out  
of place.

The Middle Ages are blamed by modern writers because all the best men and women, instead of rearing children and founding families, gave themselves heart and soul to the care of others or the contemplative life. Increase in population took place (it is objected) just where it was not merely of least value, but of positive mischief. A similar well-meant folly is not at all unlikely to-day. To say that the State must control the human output if it proposes to guarantee its comfort, is to utter



a platitude. But a good many people of excellent feeling and purpose seem quite unaware of this logic. It is the newer States which have begun to question the right of criminals, consumptives and idiots to perpetuate their failings. It is the advanced reformer who talks (not without abundant reason) of 'social surgery,' 'sterilizing the unfit,' 'putting an end to the criminal taint.' It may be that in England, individual charity or gigantic schemes of transport to regions still vacant, may in some measure mitigate this rigour. But if any one supposes that we can enjoy together the Christian ideal of freedom in these holiest relations, and the benefits of a mutual insurance Society, to be managed on strict and actuarial lines, he is living in a fool's paradise. One great problem of the future must be (experimental?) Eugenics. The claims of sanitary science once admitted, will any one say at what point a State (striving with competitors without, if not within), can afford to say, 'Thus far shalt thou go and no farther'? Having invaded the rest of life, will the State keep its hands off the most vital and essential moment of all?

It may be well to gather up the results so far. One main feature we saw in our present society is that the State has singularly practical aims, very earthly and commonplace duties. This is not due wholly to the extinction of the fires of sentiment and devotion. Most of the old causes which inspired an earlier generation have been won. Our present discontent comes from this; that having won all the great causes, we are no better off. We are faced by exactly the same problems and perils, only in an acuter form. We have cast off Pharaoh and bondage, but we are still wandering in the desert. Many of us are ungrateful enough to prefer the 'leeks and onions' of the old slavery days, when at least we were of some value in some one's eyes and to some one's purse. How bitterly has the enfranchised

Dis-  
satisfied  
with  
*political*  
reform,

slave sometimes cursed his emancipator! For the bread of personal freedom and worth he has received the stone of a suffrage, in casting which (as Rousseau told our complacent constitutionalists with some truth), he enjoys the one really free moment in his life of bondage. It is idle to say these views are distorted: it is enough that they are held by a large and increasing party. There is abroad the profoundest dissatisfaction with the purely political character of Reform. It is doubtful if Magna Charta was of especial benefit to the sub-tenants of the barons; at any rate, it weakened a central power that was after all the sole safeguard of common justice, known at the time. But it is in no way doubtful that the Reform Bill of '32 placed more power and greater wealth in the hands of those who exploited and still exploit the common people.

the  
masses  
wish to  
use State-  
omnipotence for  
social  
reform.

Nominally free and assured from the platform of his omnipotence, the worker wonders what his privileges mean? He is content to sink his freedom under a Trade-Union, to act in obedience to authority which can give him something better than titular rights. He is amenable to the discipline which controls him for his good, just as a schoolboy resents the antinomian (though he may enjoy, and afterwards be sorry for, an occasional outburst). Therefore, by common consent, the State is being armed with new powers,—not in the realms of thought or religion or morality, (for here there is no agreement) but in the sphere of business, mechanism, supervision, and adjustment. The worker knows that in the end he is omnipotent (under a despotism as under a republic); but only if he acts with his fellows in a body. He is prepared to obey any leader of whatever party or rank who will improve his condition. When newspapers, as a rule content to deprecate State-control, head their article *Government must stop the Strike*, it is clear that public opinion now endorses claims which were once believed unwarrantable.

It may then be presumed that much of this now contentious matter, the readjustment of wages and employment, and the new Protective system (only opposed by a dwindling minority)—may be conducted by non-partizans. If this elaborate Protective system has come to stay, it seems well to secure, for a purpose so national, the widest basis of agreement. We have long complained of the insincere atmosphere of our Party Government; vehement public foes going off arm-in-arm to dine or travel together; Tories passing in slightly modified form the very measures which but lately they called heaven to witness would bring ruin on the country. The public sees little of this large common agreement between honest men; it sees nothing but hostility and malevolence. We have noted the alarming decrease in respect for authority. It is in one way justified: irreverence falls not to the man who takes straightforwardly an unpopular course because he thinks it right, but to the man who is (wrongly or rightly) suspected of playing a part.

To end this mischievous interlude in which ministers on both sides seem to forfeit public esteem and confidence, it is surely needful to unite patriots on a basis of agreement, not of discord. When we speak to-day of State or Government, there rises in our mind the image of some partizan-faction engaged according to their lights in adjusting the incidents of taxation. The whole public interest is centred on finance and economics; and undue prominence is given to this side of national life. The class supposed to be most solvent and miserly at the moment is appealed to by violence and threat; and any casual visitor to England would suppose that the richer part of the commonwealth were bent on nothing but the enslavement of the poor, the financial ruin of their country. We forget that outside Parliament or off the hustings no one believes this mischievous chatter,—though we are all depraved by the constant use of phrases

This cannot be safely entrusted with the task,

because it is partizan,

because it has forfeited respect



and confidence,

we do not mean. And we forget that His Majesty's Government stands for the most part, not for the contentious and controversial, but for the great traditions of justice, order and good feeling, on which national life depends. They are there to defend the land, to administer justice and settle dispute, to ensure the maintenance of public peace, to do the hundred and one things upon which every Briton, whether Saxon, Dane, Kelt or Gael is in thorough agreement. Yet of this fundamental aspect of government we have entirely lost sight, and a minister has been known to excuse his lurid language because he 'must let off steam sometimes.' But does he forget that he is the King's minister not the mouth-piece of a faction, that the idle words he tosses to his audience and straightway forgets, must ferment into class-hatred and revolution? Let us at least hear no more of such paltry and unworthy apologies for one of the most serious errors of which a statesman is capable. It may well be that in the government of the future, no minister will be permitted to address a public meeting; just as it is unlikely that an imperial Premier will guide our policy from the front benches of the Commons.

because  
it is  
coercive,

This wild talk is in a peculiar degree harmful now because at a time when Government is supremely *necessary* it has become supremely *unpopular*. Owing to the unhappy phase in which we are always fated to behold ministers and members of parliaments, they have come to represent a narrow faction, and little more. They have lost what every ruler should have, the power of appeal, because they employ no other means but force, menace, coercion, intrigue. It would be inconceivable that any one but the King should issue a manifesto to the peoples. What a torrent of ridicule and indignation would overwhelm the luckless minister, even the Premier on the eve of a strike, who ventured to plead with the nation; to place in their hands the responsibility for

good order, and good government! The moment there is a crisis to-day, there is a thrill in the barracks, a polishing of bits and of bayonets; the telegraph wires are active with command and countermand of special trains. Yet could any school or college be managed by this absurd and needless parade of force and force alone? <sup>and there fore un-</sup>  
 That ambiguous word *democracy* is reduced in all its <sup>demo-</sup>  
<sup>cratic.</sup> senses to an absurdity, when this method of ruling is pronounced the only one fit for the 'freest and most enlightened people on the globe.' It may be said with safety that under this strongest Government of modern times, the persons of the ministers of the Crown are more thoroughly unpopular than the satellites of despots or the favourites of a corrupt court! And this, by no means by their own fault, but by a natural tendency which has reduced Government to a power purely alien and hostile in the eyes of the masses.

## G.—DEVOLUTION AND LOCAL AUTONOMY

### SEVERANCE OF CONTENTIOUS AND LOCAL ISSUES FROM IMPERIAL CONCERNS

To in-  
crease  
powers of  
unpopular  
State = to  
court  
Revolu-  
tion.

IF this 'highly organized Protective system has come to stay,' it is quite clear that its immense central powers could not be entrusted to any authority which retains this unpopular character. Much further increase of powers would merely be a prelude to revolution; or at best to a perpetual and smouldering civil war of 'passive disobedience.' The very thought of government and officialdom is most hated, as we said when it has become most necessary. No one who moves through the country and listens to the average man, can believe that any miracle will be wrought by turning out Ministry A to enthrone Ministry B. This composite and heterogeneous realm, differing widely in tongue, race, creed, and ideals of life, is at present marshalled into two fairly distinct camps. The actual majority of votes, which decides the fate of seats and ministers, is small and nearly constant. Whatever be the incoherent and sectional interests which hold these two phalanxes together, there is little prospect of any serious change in the numbers. A government of either party must be content to hold office, whatever their forces in the House, by a very slender margin of real public opinion. It cannot then have the conviction, the calmness, the self-confidence, of those who are carrying out the Sovereign's behest, or the 'Will of the People.' In spite of their professions they know they

No Minis-  
try has  
more than  
a brief  
and  
partial  
mandate.



represent but half the nation : their majority is to some extent accidental, and certain to shift to the other side at no distant date.

It is supposed that modern party government is founded upon the axioms *Vae victis!* in other words, 'Spoils to the conquerors,' and 'minorities must suffer.'

Barbarous  
axioms of  
modern  
statecraft,

It is not to be conceived that this barbarous system can long survive in a civilized nation ; that it should have dominated western Europe so long is a sinister reflection upon our vaunted progress since the Reformation. As a principle of Politics it has an evil and tainted ancestry. Machiavelli borrowed the lesson and the methods of the most unscrupulous and uncontrolled rulers in history—the tyrants of the Italian cities. Monarchs under whom that competitive entity the modern State first attained self-consciousness, perforce adopted these maxims. When the yoke of Catholicism was shaken off, the ideal of Christendom disappeared. Its place was taken by the theory of a cock-pit, the struggle of rivals to the death, the absolute power of a general commanding an army. Such theories were at least unknown in the Middle Ages, whatever may have been the lapses in common practice. The Absolutism of the State to-day comes to us direct from the strong kings who forged this weapon to rough-hew nations into the discipline of an army. But it is the frankest denial of every principle known to the old-fashioned conservative, the liberal Idealist, or the friend of 'democracy' in any form.

a legacy  
of Abso-  
lutism.

The new regime of Tudors and Bourbons and Hohenzollerns seems likely to be taken over bodily by an anonymous government of 'republican' form. In this case trouble is certain to arise. The moving principle of the *idéologues* who started the French Revolution was personal liberty ; their aim was the untrammelled interaction of free units. It surprised no one more than these philanthropic essayists when the people's government,

Far more  
hurtful  
in anonymous  
Re-  
publics.

whether under Robespierre or Napoleon, gathered up all the cynical maxims of force or intrigue from the displaced rulers, and against the sovereignty of the Individual set up (in still more peremptory form) the sovereignty of the State. As every one knows to-day the French Revolution, begun with a national accord and exulting hopes unprecedented in history, was ruined by the collision between these two interests—neither of which could be safely surrendered, though either was incompatible with the other. In the end, it was of course the individual who suffered, according to the old and inflexible maxim, *quicquid delirant reges plectuntur Achivi*; and if to-day we have to read ministers and parliaments for ‘kings and priests,’ the truth is no less conspicuous. Amid all the restless changes in Europe from 1815 onwards, perhaps at no season in history has the ‘people’ been more unhappy and despondent. They no longer have the comforting nepenthe of ignorance; they are now fully awake, and with every new technical triumph of the popular cause, they are only reminded of their real and personal distress.

Practical  
sug-  
ges-  
tions:  
(1) The  
Commons

It is no purpose of the present writer to approve (what many secretly rejoice to see to-day) the reduction of a representative assembly to helpless silence. This, in history, is the certain prelude to revolution, to the seizure of control by the fanatical element; and on every occasion known to us, this has put an abrupt end to democratic ideals and ruined popular hopes. But there must be limits to the competence of any assembly of amateurs. Government in these days seems to waver between two extremes equally mischievous: a blind following of a popular lead, or a well-meaning but inexpert debating club; an implicit and ignoble surrender to the dictator of the hour. The functions of Government must once more be carefully divided. Some will suggest that the House of Commons should be reduced to its due

place as partner, adviser and critic of the Executive. But it will be seen that this is a timid and partial remedy for this overworked and congested assembly. The crisis demands a more radical reform.

From the point of view of overwork alone, the present system cannot continue. Neither Ministry nor Commons can do efficient service in the hopeless confusion of function in modern times. Whatever may have been the shortcomings of the Scottish and Irish parliaments, these should have been cured on the spot: the crowning administrative errors of our history have been the unions of 1707 and 1800. Both were instances of that constant attempt to distort and stifle the voice of the people, which runs parallel to a pretended series of reforms. It must be now admitted that democracy can only be honestly practised as a means of government over a strictly limited area, and on a strictly limited number of questions. Switzerland may not have attained the full ideal of theorists, but at least it has a nearer approach to a really popular government than any centralized country in Europe. Federation and State-autonomy have been applied, not without success, in the United States. Out of the blind alley leading down to tyranny, devolution is the only path of escape open to the people. Certain subjects touch them nearly, subjects on which they have every right to be consulted and to make their opinions felt. Government is at present much too far off from the individual; it is to him (as we have said) still an alien and hostile element; it is not close enough to him to make him feel responsible for its measures or its policy.

But the writer has no need to repeat here the able and convincing (in truth unanswerable) arguments for separate Parliaments for each section of the British Isles. There is nothing sacrosanct or inviolable about the present unity, for many purposes purely formal.

to be  
divided  
and re-  
lieved of  
confused  
and  
complex  
functions  
which it  
fails to  
discharge.



Provincial  
Diets and  
racial  
autonomy. Irish and Welsh have not forgotten that they are conquered countries, annexed to a predominant partner : the memory of the older and less progressive races is a long one. Ireland and Scotland have lost their own representative systems by compromise or corrupt influence ; in each case for the interest of the governing clique who at the moment usurped sole powers at Westminster. Once more it must be said, no free government can rule a people against its will, no 'democratic' system can accept the principle of coercion as final. Belief in freedom cannot be reconciled with the tyranny of the many over the few. Once more we must assert that centralism, the fatal legacy of Monarchy to the modern State, cannot satisfy the diverse needs of many peoples gathered under a single sovereign. The very meaning of empire implies not rigid uniformity, but variety of type, freedom of function, autonomy of district. Let those pause and reflect who deny the right of local debate, and some administrative competence to nationalities other than their own ; they are denying, not a system of government, but freedom and 'democracy,' which they profess to value. Let those, too, who wish to suspend the franchise of people in favour of 'intellectual minorities,' accept their true title as the party of reaction : their policy is a complete negation of liberty in any intelligible form. Nor have those any right to be called advocates of freedom who believe that a majority of whatever kind, in whatever number, by however slender a margin, may override the few. 'Democracy' has seen during the years of its nominal sway, a vast increase in the method and engines of coercion, all at the service of the centralized State. If the word so prostituted can regain any real meaning and value, we must revert to a simpler and better type.

Demo-  
cracy  
hitherto

It is a moot point whether any country has seriously proposed to put in force that system of government

which is termed in vulgar parlance *democratic*. The Athenians, the trading republics of Germany or the Lombard plains, must be called oligarchic according to any modern standard. China which is fundamentally democratic in spirit, is (or has been) singularly docile before a privileged and perhaps corrupt order, which cleverness or memory raises to office out of the very poorest ranks. Every government in Europe or America which has conceded the principle of universal or nearly universal suffrage, has at once set about finding indirect methods of nullifying its generosity. The polity of the United States is a perfect network of checks, cunningly devised against that old bogey, the violent and thoughtless caprice of the 'people.' In Europe delegates (soon claiming to be independent thinkers, not mere mandatories), everywhere water down the national will, and direct public notice to quite trivial questions and quarrels. The Ministry awkwardly situated between two stools as servants of the king or president and yet accountable to the people, spend their time in ostensible support and private thwarting of the designs of the sections who send them to power. Venerable *simulacra* still survive.

Meantime nothing can exceed the suspicion and distrust which the doctrinaire entertains of the average voter, whose collective force becomes the People's Will. It is not long since that a gifted woman (Mrs. Philip Snowden, at the Albert Hall, Feb. 23, 1912) exposed the real attitude of the reformer by maintaining that 'improvement in history has always been the work of *intellectual minorities*.' This may be true as fact and even wise as policy, but it is not democracy. A system which sets out to count heads instead of breaking them, must act with common honesty. It must not first make the people elect nominees and then override them or reduce them to silence by a Ministry of all the Talents.

never seriously applied,

nor reconciled with representation, still less with Cabinet-autocracy.

Strange distrust of the *Referendum*.

## 80 NEW GOVERNMENT FOR BRITISH EMPIRE

Power  
usurped  
by Cabals,

However valuable their advice, the *intelligenza* must not coerce or cajole ; their only method is to convince and to persuade. If there is one form of government that is at last wholly discredited, it is that of the benevolent despot. But a cabal of cleverness is still more perilous ; and what is comforting, still more unpopular. It is not the essence of 'democratic' institutions that the wise few should drive along the sheep-like many on a path of ideal progress ; or that the majority should trample on minorities, whether of conscience, of birth, or of talent. One of the most serious and disquieting symptoms of the time is the curious attitude adopted by the 'party of Progress' to the *Referendum*.

unable or  
unwilling  
to heal  
social ills.

The essence of democracy seems, then, very imperfectly understood at the present date. While the demands of the people are becoming every moment more insistent and articulate, the parties in power are content to throw sops in the guise of political reform, for which there is but a fictitious demand, and to pronounce beforehand on the voice and temper of a people whom they are afraid to consult directly. It is no wonder that the real character of the ideal is concealed beneath verbiage and subterfuge. Democracy implies agreement in essentials, tolerance in matters indifferent ; union for all common aims and the freest of free speech : in all other concerns, 'live and let live' must be the guiding maxim. So long as the present party-system lasts, it is impossible amid the dust of conflict to see how large is this area of agreement. With all its obvious defects and anomalies, with all the prevalent distrust of its amateur methods, it is likely that some form of representation is needed in a modern State,—that complex, shapeless and overgrown thing which royal conquest or parliamentary deceit has somehow welded together.

Devolu-  
tion does  
not imply

It will be at once retorted that this devolution must imply administrative anarchy and national weakness.



This mistaken assumption is due to the mental confusion which prevails between proper and improper subjects of democratic control. The central idea of the new scheme will be a careful discrimination. We do not submit to a *plébiscite* the question of maintaining our laws in general, our judicial system, our national defence, or the broad principles of right and justice. We accept in the main the traditional system, partly because our fathers have formed it, and a people is by nature apt rather to conserve than to destroy;—partly because, apart from sentiment, time, as it were, has justified and consecrated customs, beliefs, and institutions which have stood its test. The most violent advocate of popular rights does not suggest that treaties and foreign relations should be submitted for a direct vote to those who, with the best will and principles, cannot be expected to understand the facts. There are, then, certain matters of such common consent and agreement that no one outside the criminal class proposes to alter them. There are also matters of secrecy, expedition, and professional knowledge which can only be safely entrusted to experts. Side by side with these two types of public business are manifold points at issue in which the people at large—those who bear any share of tax or personal service—have a right not only to express their opinion, but to make their will felt.

These are not matters of agreement or of uniformity. They cannot with any justice be safely administered from Whitehall, even by the most disinterested public servants. They are concerns of local fitness, of racial or lingual, or even religious, prejudice. There is ample scope, if we are really sincere in saying that we trust the people, for committing such matters to provincial good sense, and the compromise of provincial classes; who, at least, have to live with one another. We have no need to trench on the competence of a central

central  
weakness.

Limits to  
compet-  
ence of  
amateurs,

who yet  
have large  
field open  
to them.

government in matters which really pertain to it. We have no occasion to foretell the disintegration of an empire, because we allow the people to decide in the sole matters which to them are of genuine and immediate concern.

## H.—THE MONARCHY AND THE IMPERIAL SENATE

WITHOUT any violent novelty, we have ready to our hand the two institutions to which the larger issues may safely be committed, when once rescued from entanglement or the party spirit,—Kingship and the Upper House. The writer is quite aware that many, having read thus far, perhaps with approval, will now lay down this essay as the lucubration of a reactionary. They will believe him to hide under an assumed mask of sympathy a real hatred of democracy. Such a charge would be wholly unjust; he believes fully in the native goodness of our people, in their competence to deal with the matters they understand. He protests only against the travesty of freedom and public opinion which has been the sole result of our boasted political advance. He wishes it to be made impossible for ‘intellectual minorities’ or any all-powerful minister to foist changes on a silent and astonished people in the name of popular right, for any party to play fast and loose with the national security, or with the recognized distinctions of right and wrong. He wishes to rescue ‘Government’ from its present overwhelming burden of overwork, unpopularity, and precarious tenure. He wishes to restore to the masses a power of decision in all things that touch them closely; some semblance of vitality and interest to the decaying councils in village, county, and province. Finally, he wishes to give to the institutions, which alone, at the present moment, seem to command

(2) Two  
factors  
still com-  
manding  
attention:  
King and  
Peers,



respect, all those matters where moral force, sympathetic appeal, and affectionate loyalty are fundamental and indispensable. Can a nation be governed, in permanence or with safety, by force, ridicule, aspersion, mutual invective, and party-spirit?

*as responsible, as respected.*

*Commons and Cabinet not responsible.*

Government, in the larger issues, must be responsible, and it must be respected. It is one of the idlest fallacies of eighteenth-century enlightenment that the government of a king is not responsible, while the government of the people's delegates is. A hasty and unlesirely age like the present takes most of its facts on trust, most of its theories ready-made. We have adopted and solemnly repeat this formula as if in it lay the secret of all true political method. A moment's scrutiny will expose it. The peoples have no hold on their delegates, who may be entrapped or silenced by the cabal in power; may be misled by the specious argument that they are not delegates, but plenipotentiaries. The sole penalty till recent days for outstripping a mandate is to lose a seat; but the tie between members and constituents often sits very loosely. In no conceivable sense is a careless or fraudulent representative accountable to the people. With still greater force is this true of ministers and their policy. Under our present scheme a demagogue might (from sheer light-heartedness, ignorance, or class-envy) set every one by the ears, ride for a fall, and then vanish unnoticed into private life without suffering a single penalty for the untold mischief he has wrought. That we do not, and in all likelihood will not, experience this is due to no secret virtue or explicit safeguard in our constitution, but to the good feeling and common sense of British character, whatever its race, creed, or political belief.

*Representative character of Kingship,*

It is only when there is certain tenure, continuous interest and unbroken tradition, that we can hope to find any genuine responsibility. The history of most nations

has to be re-written from an intelligent standpoint; the older verdicts on men and policies are to a great extent out of date. It is now clear that many of the 'struggles for freedom' have been the selfish work of oligarchy, prejudice and privilege; many of the great despotisms, figuring in such black and sinister colours, have only attempted to obtain common justice and equal treatment for all their subjects. Even the conqueror has been the deliverer. As the king is the 'first Liberal' in history, <sup>as in the past,</sup> so wherever antagonism is felt to monarchic control we presume (until reassured) that it is due to the factious opposition of a minority unjustly privileged. This group of noble or wealthy families are sworn together to fetter the people and keep them in manorial or industrial serfdom. It is the single ruler who breaks these chains and stands as a champion of a larger franchise and wider opportunities. Whether he works with benevolence or force, he, and he alone, is the creator, not merely of the modern State, but of nationalities. Men may differ as to the value of the centralism, and unities the worth of Imperialism; they may deplore the burdens which they entail upon the shoulders of the taxpayer. But granted that the modern State is one step nearer the ideal, no sane critic will dispute the almost exclusive claims of Monarchy. It was the king in western Europe who called his servants from every rank and class, broke down barriers of caste, and opened careers for merit and ability. He became, in virtue of his person and his office, the real spokesman of the silent and disinherited masses.

The King is therefore, as the most central, so the <sup>so in the present.</sup> most representative and responsible factor in the government or in the national life. Everything else but the Civil Service (which carries out and cannot initiate) is discontinuous and incoherent. People speak sometimes as if ministers were of necessity professional, but the

Ministers  
of sections  
cannot  
assume  
this  
character.

statesman who appeals to the people has very rarely time for a profession, certainly not for the art of ruling. It is no disparagement or aspersion to say that he must live from hand to mouth; and it has often and rightly been objected that, while he is intent on watching the tone and temper of his electors, he cannot treat the larger issues with impartial calm. Appearing to lead, he really follows, and trims his sails to an uncertain breeze. While failure can bring no sterner punishment than loss of office and popular esteem, he has little at stake, little to lose. He is often tempted through personal pique to fish in troubled waters. When confidence is withdrawn he retires to private life with impunity, and resumes the leisure of a country gentleman, or the heavier duties of an attorney. Such welcome respite and relief cannot fall to a sovereign. Like Amadeus of Savoy in Spain, he may be only the alien pensioner brought in as figure-head or umpire, because no native could be anything but a partizan. But he pays the same price for his dignity as the most absolute monarch, that is, he is held accountable by the general public in a way ministers are not. He is supposed, even in the most intelligent countries, to be able to control national success, and, at least, he is held responsible for its failure.

Gradual  
effect of  
Revolution,  
1688,

One of the most remarkable features (or fallacies) of the age is this popular clinging to the belief in monarchic efficacy. A fanatical speaker during the recent coal strike (March, 1912) predicted that if the strike took place the monarchical system would fall. Now the whole and sole justification for withdrawing the sovereign after 1688 from visible and direct contact with affairs was to secure his safety, not to diminish his influence.<sup>1</sup> How many times within half a century had not the Commons to debate on the succession, the religion of the heir to the throne, even on the ultimate form of government! From

<sup>1</sup> See the excellent summaries in Seeley and Sidgwick.



a constant repetition of such controversies touching the pivot and centre of the State, they very naturally shrank. This instability of the throne filled them with alarm, and they decided (or rather the great families who directed their policy) to surround the king with greater dignity and reserve, and leave the ministers to bear the brunt of conflict, criticism, and impeachment. Thus we established to the admiration of Continental liberals a system whereby ministries fell rather than dynasties. Thus Parliament professed honestly to regard ministers as servants of the Crown, and paid them deference, while at the same time they criticized their conduct, and with increasing confidence dictated their policy. Yet the result could not be avoided. During the reigns of George and William (1820-1837) ministers nominated elsewhere, ceased to merit this title of His Majesty's servants. The pretence lives on to-day, but it is a threadbare imposture or a legal fiction. The Sovereign now (so far as the public are permitted to know) is obliged to accept the party and its leader with absolute impartiality, without choice or change of attitude. Ministers of to-day are the all-powerful delegates of the people sent to dictate their measures and policy to the supposed Sovereign and source of authority. But is the titular ruler thereby relieved of one particle of his anxious burden, of his ultimate responsibility? It is inconceivable that either King or people can much longer tolerate this unequal distribution, this perilous anomaly.

to with-  
draw the  
King from  
public  
activity,

make his  
Ministers  
the  
People's.

This would be a logical result if we had the courage to reduce monarchs in Europe to the status of a Mikado before 1868. So sacred and ineffable was the divine leader of the Japanese race, that he had made a permanent delegation of all his effective powers and distracting duties to a soldier-dictator, the Shogun. This arrangement was not due to republican feeling or suspicion of absolutism,—the Shogun was no less

King not  
thereby  
relieved  
from res-  
ponsi-  
bility for  
general  
welfare.

absolute. It was due partly to respect for an ancient family (above all things, the centre must be made secure) —partly to a desire for direct, efficient, and *responsible* government. It is a matter of history how the Shoguns themselves fell into the same easy method of delegation : his office became as dignified and ineffective, as hereditary and irresponsible as that of the Mikado. The standing puzzle under the Shogunate was to find out in the elaborate system of check and counter-check, of titular rulers and busy clerks, where any authority could be said to reside. The Revolution which displaced this singular form of government, merely removed one of the figure-heads ; and reinstated the Mikado in a little more obvious position, with the unlimited prestige and scanty powers of a 'constitutional ruler.' Genuine force fell as heretofore into the hands of families and clannish factions. Yet it is incontestable that the stability of Japan is largely owing to an almost religious awe for the representative of the oldest dynasty on earth. A country, in other respects republican, could not play a vigorous part in domestic reform, trade disputes, and foreign ambition, unless it had this undisputed background of certainty.

Yet it would be absurd to compare the highly-educated and carefully-trained sovereign of the Victorian age<sup>1</sup> with any Asiatic recluse. If knowledge is power, the wide travels and experience, the public intercourse, the long instruction in history, must place a Western ruler at an advantage when consulting with his advisers.

New type  
of Euro-  
pean Mon-  
archy  
since 1837.

Personal influence (except possibly in the choice of viziers) is the rarest thing on an Eastern throne. Partly the ideal of luxurious ease, partly the awe and homage

<sup>1</sup> It is Queen Victoria's influence and example which has entirely remodelled throughout Europe the ideal of constitutional sovereignty. It is, of course, still uncertain how far it can succeed among peoples, who are, partly through ignorance, partly through envy, suspicious of the royal name and authority.

paid to a divine seclusion, have from the earliest days doomed an absolute ruler to political nonentity. The modern ruler in the West is, it must at once be stated, an entirely new type; not a pale survival or an uneasy anachronism. Let any student compare the character, the aims, and the competence of monarchs to-day with the same points in any favourite era of Absolutism, say from 1700 to 1790. Under our very eyes, Turkey, Persia, and China have followed the example set by Japan in freeing themselves from unmeaning forms. A 'despotic' system in each case has fallen, at the first blow; for nothing is more facile than the abrupt transition from one form of government to the other. This is not, and cannot be, the case with us in Europe. Monarchy has found new outlets for its energy, and new functions. Otherwise it would be hard to account for the sense of heavy burden, of the value of character and discipline, which is felt by the wearers of crowns who are training their heirs for a difficult and still useful task.

At least one ideal has been discredited: the constitutional ruler cannot be an amiable absentee like Pedro of Brazil. Whether he acts with vigour or under ministerial instruction, the people at large expect him to know everything, to weigh everything, and to desire nothing, which, in his conscience, he cannot approve. It is quite idle to deny that they are stern critics of the deportment, the business, the pleasures, the friends of a reigning sovereign. Much they will pardon and overlook. But they will never excuse cowardice, sloth, or indecision. The more partizan and sectional government becomes, the more the people expect a lead and a safeguard in the highest quarter. It has been said with truth that 'no strong government has ever had to face a revolution.' The people have rarely ejected a strong man or resented his heavy hand. Had the bluff and unscrupulous Ferdinand of Naples lived a few years longer, the raid of

*Roi fainéant* unacceptable (because superfluous).

Popular respect for honest conviction,



Garibaldi would certainly have failed. It is only the half-hearted and the indolent that suffer. The Radical mob at Oxford responded loudly to the appeal: 'Let's cheer Lord Eldon; he never ratted.' It seems of the essence of the ultimate power to intervene seldom and take no side. But this rule implies no inaction; rather constant vigilance, outspoken courage.

'personal  
govern-  
ment  
hazar-  
dous,'

It must be frankly confessed that those who fear an obvious increase in royal prerogative have a good case. The old fallacy that personal government is tyrannous is never advanced to-day; it is recognized that, reposing as it does on moral rather than physical force, it will probably oppress individual liberty less than any other form of rule. Set purpose to be vindictive and disagreeable it has none; (except of course in those *inorganic* half-States wherein, as Seeley says, the king is merely the helpless leader of a dominant caste, living on the toil of a conquered people). In every other case, it is now acknowledged that the monarch is the first Liberal: with the increase of his personal power liberty dawns, and harmony is within sight. Objectors do not then plead the cruelty and weight of such a yoke; but granted the good intention of a king, they point to the precarious character of the benefits he can confer. The mischief of a benevolent despot in his very benevolence is brought to light. Sometimes, like Aristotle, the professed Liberal will, with a sudden turn, glorify the rule of the philosopher-king as the best government, securely confident that such a union will never be found. But all agree on the uncertainty of obtaining in a hereditary line a succession of able rulers; and expose the danger of making national life depend on one frail human body and will. No country (it is said) can afford to expose its sovereign, and with him its stability, to the gusts of public opinion: it is safer to change a Ministry in England than to expel a regal house, as in France. The force of such arguments

yet con-  
stant  
appeal to  
King,  
'govern as  
well as  
reign.'

the writer does not for a moment seek to minimize. At the same time, no one can try to appreciate the whole tone of our public Press, since perhaps the first Jubilee of Victoria in 1887, down to the present time, without noting the tendency to invest the Sovereign with far more positive functions than our constitutional practice will strictly allow. It is by no means from the party of reaction that the most impressive appeals seem to come.

The popular interest in royalty shows no sign of 'Loyalty.' abating, and at least needs explaining, either by the politician or the psychologist. Why is an institution, according to the text-books, entirely deprived of the slightest power over our life, purse, or conduct, regarded with an amount of affection and unreasoning loyalty, without parallel it may safely be said, in history? With us the personal factor is without doubt very strong. Few more typical, more human, and more diverse characters have filled a public position than Victoria, Edward VII., and George V. It would be quite idle to deny that it is personal influence that has built up the great reserve-fund of loyalty, which might be squandered (like all things which depend on the personal equation) by some indiscreet act or oversight. Still the Monarchy would stand many a shock before it was displaced in the public affection. Unhappily (as is clear in recent events in Portugal) it is not the nation that decides whether its kingly family shall be retained or expelled. In issuing an ultimatum to Monarchy there is nothing that the idealist Republican fears so much as a referendum! For the people have always been good monarchists.

Some have noticed the curious result which ensued when the Sovereign ceased to exercise the right of naming ministers: these then became the people's delegates, keeping the name, servants of the Crown, only by a polite and transparent fiction. From that moment the Monarch became, in a special and peculiar

*New rôle  
for Mon-  
archy.*

sense, the people's representative. There is this permanent objection to *elected* rulers,—that their electors never completely trust them. While man's nature remains what it is (and even the 'mechanical age' cannot quite alter it) it is unlikely in the highest degree that delegates, whether as members of the Commons, or as ministers 'in the Sovereign's Cabinet,' will ever become genuinely popular. One vindication of heredity is certainly derived from this; the people like to choose a disinterested, generous, well-born Patron. The theory of patronage has not been adequately enough treated even by the most serious political writers: and a few words on the subject may not here be out of place. In the accepted theory the king has often been strangely confused and bound up with the Patriarch: with whom except perhaps in the Chinese ideal (adopted nowhere else) he has the least possible connection. Wherever Monarchy is not a frank brigandage with a captain and his band, it is a form of *patronage*,—that is, an umpire chosen freely in a native or, preferably, a foreign family. It will be noted that the king does not govern, does not administer, does not legislate (compare Maine's remark on Duleep Singh), perhaps does not even intervene until he is invited. He is regarded as a final and exceptional Court of Appeal, as a guardian against civil feuds, the oppressive influence of selfish wealth, or the oppressive rule of a section in power. It was the perverted, if necessary, idea of post-Reformation royalty, that bound the king up inextricably with every movement of the law, every blow or bribe of the policeman, every injustice of privilege. Monarchy, as sole source of authority, in whose name the right and wrong were done, lost the peculiarly detached, yet vigilant attitude, on which had largely depended its Mediæval popularity.

King as  
*patron*,  
not  
*patriarch*.

Monarchy  
disen-  
tangled

It is this attitude which since 1840, still more since 1887, has been, at least in England, slowly and surely



recovering in the eyes of more sensitive observers. While it is true that our notion of Sovereignty, one and indivisible, still implicates the ruler in the process of the law-courts, and the safe delivery of letters and parcels, it is clear that the genuine influence of the Monarchy is not really frittered away in these petty duties. The machine of Government with its daily duties goes on of itself. The curious phenomenon of the past seventy years is that from all such entanglement, the Monarchy has gradually set itself free. It has become, instead, something distinct and apart, a power in reserve that will not encroach or intervene until the very last extremity,—which without obvious effort or parade of majesty is unceasingly watching the delegates and ministers of the people. It is worth while to notice an entire parallel in the old Chinese polity just overthrown. The masses mostly govern themselves, or are swayed by family, custom, and village tradition. The provinces were autonomous members of a federal system; a viceroy (himself risen by personal merit through the rank of a democratic hierarchy) though invested at Peking, could refuse to send aid of men or ships, to support the quarrels of the central Government. He assessed the taxes, and administered the finances, sending what he could (by no means a large sum) to the Court. Between people and local ruler there was a perfectly clear understanding: a penal code (the brutalities of which have been very much exaggerated) was enforced on the guilty by the full consent of the governed; but a serious revolt would have followed any unwise change in customs or taxation. A Chinaman would have protested as stoutly against the Budgets of the present Chancellor of the Exchequer as against the Ship-money of Charles I.

from  
routine  
coercion  
of State.

Auto-  
nomy and  
Des-  
potism  
side by  
side (as in  
China).

In the system of complete provincial autonomy, had the central authority no place or function? It was not, to be sure, the function of direct government, but of

The  
Despot  
does not  
rule but  
intervenes  
in last  
resort.

supervision. The Emperor as such had (until quite recent times) no more troops at his disposal than his Mediæval counterpart in Germany. He could not (strictly speaking) enforce any commands. In criticizing or removing viceroys he was obliged not only to take council of the advisory council within the Forbidden City but to follow exact precedence. And he was well aware that his own words and actions were carefully noted by cool and unbiassed critics, who never left his side,—not for his own reading, but for the judgment of posterity. The Board of Censors could always “memorialize” the Throne, and raise remonstrances upon the waste or vice of his private life as well as upon the errors of public policy. The chief duty of the Emperor thus fenced and guarded (and since 1807 practically a State-prisoner of the Court-party)—was to watch over the conduct of officials; not to govern, not to administer, not to meddle, but as a judge of the Law to wait until invited to intervene. Only in such cases is there an autocracy, for this intervention is final. By common consent (not by the physical force of armed servants) the Emperor had the last word. It is no use disguising the abuse which crept into an ideal so lofty; but to the very end—to the unhappy days of reaction which destroyed Kwangsu and all hopes of Manchu reform—the Emperor was looked upon as the Father, the Representative, and the Guardian of his people. What would Machiavelli, Austin, or Frederic the Great have said to such a nicely balanced theory of sovereignty?

British  
trust in  
Kingship.

No one would deny after a moment's reflection that (beside the personal charm and personal virtue of our recent Sovereigns) to some such theory as this is due the new reverence and confidence which we show to the King. The *Patron* is regarded as the last and unfailing resort; not to be vulgarized and brought into petty conflict or routine, but to be kept for defence in an

emergency, advice or appeal in a crisis, final decision in controversy. It cannot be doubted that this *patronal* relation between Roman nobles and provincial cities, made easy the transition to one single and Imperial patron; (just as the *comitatus*, or band of chosen and sworn followers, founded the feudal monarchy some 400 years later). That the noble or the emperor was a stranger and an alien, was no objection but an advantage. He was not wanted to perform the duties of a local magistrate, act as custodian of city custom, or cheapen authority by constant petty encroachments; *majus aliquid et excelsius a principe postulatur*, said Tiberius with equal dignity and justice (Tacitus, 'Ann.' iii. 53). The popular favour towards such an equitable power, rarely intervening, will always increase in times of unrest and discontent. Apart, then, from the noble and unselfish labours of Victoria, the charm and ability of Edward VII., the manly directness and thoroughness of our present King, the expectant glances at royalty mark the critical temper of the age. The old belief is revived that 'if only the king could come by his own, all would once again be well.'

It was at one time believed that the people had a single will, and a nation a common purpose, both thwarted by evil rulers. To dismiss these usurpers with scant ceremony and some violence was an easy task; the old régime depended on physical force to an extent surprisingly small. The truth was gradually revealed that the dispossessed government had held diverse interests in a sort of union, had at least hindered rival sections and parties from leaping at each other's throats. The modern danger, unlooked for by the old idealist, lies not in the harmony and solid purpose, but in the ceaseless divisions of the People. When the greater issues were won (as the archaic Liberalism styled them), personal freedom, open debate, and

Old  
fallacy  
of 'the  
People's  
Will.'  
Neither  
State nor  
People an  
organic  
unity.



In public  
feuds  
King must  
assume  
rôle of  
Referee.

representative methods, pettier but not less mischievous causes of division came to the light. Representation has ended in a dead-lock, in which amid needless friction and perpetual movement no real advance is made. To-day it is almost impossible to legislate except by the closure. Economic competition, industrial rivalry, is the real subject of all our contention, all our anxiety. The Sovereign is not filled with concern at some formal narrowing of prerogative, but at the sight of a nation actually in a state of civil war, under the decent forms of modern hypocrisy. A country may be fortunate (as some account it) to have clearly marked and responsible parties, each ready and waiting to exchange the rôle of criticism for that of government: but what if such parties are evenly balanced, if it is impossible to decide what is the desire of the majority? If parliamentary rule comes, as seems only likely, to a complete *impasse*, the Sovereign will be forced to resume much of the authority of a referee. It is still an established maxim, for which common sense and practical needs admit of no exception, that "the king's government must be carried on."

The King  
to preside  
at his own  
(non-  
party)  
Councils,  
to choose  
his own  
Ministers.

The Sovereign then will be restored to his place at his own council-board; he will be re-admitted to his own Cabinet. He will select imperial ministers, and his choice will often be suggested and directed by the new Upper House, of which mention must presently be made. It has been said that, however much to be wished, this restoration cannot be effected: since like Privy Council meetings the proceedings in such august presence would tend to be formal; and the real business would be prepared and settled elsewhere. The writer is quite aware of the extreme delicacy of involving Sovereignty in party disputes, in decisions on which failure may attend. A minister may be offered up as a scapegoat; but a monarch must be shielded behind the (legal) axiom 'the king can

do no wrong.' At the same time it must be pointed out, that if (as is so often said) the people are the judges, they are sure to prefer manly decision to legal fictions and Japanese dogmas of divine inaccessibility. Kämpfer tells us that the Mikado in the heyday of the Shogunate and its usurped power, had to sit motionless each day for several hours, wearing his crown, as an emblem and augury of untroubled peace for the land, if he kept absolutely still and showed no signs of fatigue. But to save the divine son of the goddess from inconvenience, it was decided to suspend the crown to the throne and dispense with his personal attendance: the effect was found to be the same.

Two points must be remembered; first, that the Monarch is infinitely better known to the world, as a person and character, in our own time than formerly; secondly, that the prerogative has been, if not strained, at least employed without scruple by statesmen, sometimes for purposes of party, sometimes for national ends. The Abolition of Purchase in the Army was an act of sovereign prerogative; the Premier was granted full powers in recommending new Peers to secure the passing of the Budget of 1909, an act of autoeracy which may easily be copied under advisers of a very different stamp; lastly, the personal authority of King George V. was paraded in India at the Durbar, it is believed by all competent to judge, with the happiest result.<sup>1</sup> The 'mechanical age' (we are told) has altered human nature, and destroyed, by self-interest or anxious daily drudgery, those generous sentiments which, in a more impressionable age, would make 'ten thousand swords leap from their scabbards to avenge even a look that threatened a sovereign with insult.' This is not the place to discuss a matter of experience, which must differ with each person, and is an affair of psychology.

Prerogative-to-day strained for the benefit of factions,

The must become personal and therefore national.

<sup>1</sup> See Saint Niljal Singh, *Nineteenth Century*, March, 1912.

Value of  
*personal*  
relations.

If one is told that 'the age of chivalry is gone for ever' one can only deny or affirm a statement (or a prophecy) so vague and general: to examine or prove it is, in the very nature of the case, beyond human skill. But as against the pessimist, it may be said that wherever relations between workman and employer are direct and personal, there is no lack of this sentiment: it is even conspicuous during a strike in the most disaffected districts. No one who witnesses a public appearance of Royalty can doubt that chivalry is strong, if latent, and seeks an outlet for those feelings which in the critical and vindictive atmosphere of our public life must be stifled.

Complex  
basis of  
Loyalty.

Politics in one sense embraces almost the whole of human life, although in another it merely touches the surface. At the present time it tends to become superficial and external: in the too familiar conception of government as 'an alien and hostile power.' Well-meant efforts are made to give back to the State the old spiritual value and moral appeal of classical times; but they are made futile by the changes which pass over minds as well as institutions. We look elsewhere for our sentiment and our motives. Yet in a healthy community it should be possible to include all parts of the soul in the public service; and it should not be obsolete or affected to feel not merely a material or selfish incentive, a cool sense of justice, but an emotion. It has been shown how the *patronal* rather than *administrative* character of the King has detached him from the routine work of government. In the eyes of the people he holds his prerogative somehow as a precious reserve, not to be lightly used for everyday work. There has now appeared another reason for an attitude which, to the strict democrat, must seem indefensible. No other institution engages in a like degree the natural and personal emotions. It is well known that the favourite form of democracy, when it

The  
People  
always  
*persona-*  
*list.*



becomes more than an idle expression, is a limited dictatorship,—limited, not in power, but in time. This species of government has been the perilous resort of the impatient reformer or the discontented people from very early times. Whatever may be said to-day by any half-hearted apologist of our present constitution, it is in essence the government in force to-day. But such a fleeting and closely criticized autocracy is viewed in no other light than a useful implement, a convenient tool. It cannot pretend to evoke any other feeling. Either it does its work well, and is given a new lease of power; if it fails, it is dismissed without pity or regret. It is this utilitarian basis of authority that has made it so purely external.

Evil of  
mere  
utili-  
tarian  
Caesarism

If, then, politics are to become once again something more than a system of outward restraint, are to admit warmer sentiment than Burke's 'sophisters, economists, and calculators' can call forth, it would seem as if a more careful use must be made of the asset of Monarchy. The busy, restless, and contentious world of the future has no place for a pageant-king, an automaton who dispenses other men's favours, and sets his signature to other men's decrees. The Sovereign, in many countries by far the most 'popular' figure, must play a man's part as he receives a man's wage. The conceptions of Bolingbroke and Beaconsfield are not, as is commonly supposed, out of date or without meaning for a later and almost wholly different age. Man's surroundings have altered more in the last eighty years than in the whole interval from Constantine to the era of railways. But in spite of the pressure of outward things, man has not been completely automatized. He still responds to moral emotion and appeal; the warm heart and the sympathetic address are not even in business and statistics wholly antiquated. It is admitted that in the avowed revival of something like personal government, there is a certain risk. At the

not found  
in Mon-  
archy.

To whose  
profit to  
keep Mon-  
archy in  
tutelage?

same time it is only the cowardly, or the interested that would advise a brave man to relinquish his duty for fear of the consequences of a mistake. To whose advantage is it to keep the Monarchy in leading strings? Certainly not that of the country or the empire, to which it appeals not merely as the bond and symbol of union for the whole, but as the single moral force which modern changes have not overthrown.

(3) The  
Upper  
House.

(Crime of  
Constitutional  
change,  
without  
Con-  
stituent  
As-  
sembly.)

The  
Lords,  
still the  
more  
respected  
partner in  
the Legis-  
lature,

The Abolition of the Peers' Veto, and suggestion of 'Upper House Reform' from both parties, have given a new opportunity to Greater Britain and the larger issues and interests. It may be conceded that the privilege of the Peers was in some degree an anachronism; though neither study of history nor common sense can justify a fundamental change in the Constitution by a bare and accidental majority. Without wasting time (and perhaps temper) on a contentious matter, it may be pointed out that in England alone is such a measure possible,—the supposed home of phlegmatic caution, dislike of hurry and inbred conservatism. Every other State in the world makes provision against such fundamental changes by assemblies not expressly chosen for the purpose. It is enough now to point out with regret that the dangerous precedent has been set; and that the monopoly of such haste will not lie solely with the party of progress. Still the moment of suspense and transition may be turned to useful account. The House of Lords has in no way lost its dignity or popular respect, because it has been shorn of a somewhat nominal right, because there is now some prospect of recruits of influence and merit arriving from other sources than privileged families. It is not too much to say that the public interest is largely directed towards the Upper House. Its members are always heard or read with attention; its debates are followed with far greater care than those in the popular House; and all the world allows the gravity and

straightforwardness of a non-elective assembly. A step has now been taken, which can only result in increasing its importance and value. Due respect for the ancient, and by no means obsolete, principle of heredity may combine a proportion of Peers by birthright with new and truly Imperial elements.

If the House of Commons has been found wanting (through faults other than its own) for the multifarious duties thrust on it by increasing popular demand, this cannot be said of the Peers' Chamber, even as it is constituted at present. Commanding confidence for its honesty and common sense, secretly respected even by foes for its judicial caution and respect for tradition, the Lords might be transformed even without radical reform, into the chief deliberative organ of the State. Even with its minimized prerogative, it still performs more valuable service than the House of Commons. This once important body, under the pressure of the Cabinet in power, has in the past half-century dwindled into a mere Court of Registration, an arena of invective, of inconclusive arguments and foregone conclusions. The Minister in power holds, like any Bourbon monarch, a Bed of Justice, forcing immature measures on a muzzled House. The freedom of the Lords is due to individual, personal convictions, fearlessly expressed, to an independence of view, peculiarly British. The respect paid to them is due to a very natural trust in their non-elective character. The peer taking part in public life is giving his services of his own free will, and without ulterior design or motive. He is obeying the plea of conscience and principle that demands hard work from high places. He is often loudly charged with selfish purpose (but not often really suspected) in guarding the interest of oligarchy rather than the nation's welfare. But in any case he is not a 'professional politician.' He is not a stranger who amid the fierce resistance of half a city or half a

to become  
chief  
organ of  
Imperial  
interests.

(Frank-  
ness  
and dis-  
interested  
public  
service  
welcome  
to-day.)



county has managed to capture the vote of the other half. He is not a paid delegate (as members of Parliament have become) who may be tempted to sacrifice conscience and constituents by servile following of the party whip. He at least is not attracted by the income paid to sitting representatives of the people, by a measure which (though bound to come) has deprived Britain of her unique boast, —gratuitous public service.

The great  
problem,  
Sove-  
reignty of  
State and  
of indi-  
vidual :  
how re-  
concile ?

Yet all will admit that the time was, in any case, ripe for a change. The real issue to-day is still the old problem of Nerva and Trajan, after Domitian's death, how to combine Empire and Liberty, the Sovereignty of the State and the Sovereignty of the Individual. The worker wishes for genuine, not merely 'political freedom,' he wishes for material things, and not seldom as a means to a better life, and a spiritual purpose; he is, as we saw above, alert, well-informed and discontented. But he is not therefore self-seeking; he is still patriotic, though his country often gives him so little; he is underneath his roughness touchingly loyal to masters, landlords and employers, who do not perhaps always deserve it. Provided his first claims can find outlet without implicating at every turn the greater Imperial issues, there is nothing to be feared from his activity. It is only through a sense of justice satisfied, and good feeling created in things directly concerning him, that he can turn his eyes without prejudice to the higher duties of a citizen. It is, therefore, not because we despair of his understanding, or his loyalty, that we recommend him to deal first with simpler matters than the concerns of Empire. In spite of our popular forms, government is no less secret and absolute in foreign relations than when alliances and wars and treaties were decided in the boudoir of a king's mistress.

(Average  
citizen  
makes no  
claim to  
direct  
larger  
issues.)

*Libertas*  
in Diets,  
*Imperium*  
in the  
Lords.

The Upper House presents a spectacle which the man of science would joyfully welcome in the realm of Nature: a type or species in the very act of transformation into a

novel form, adapting itself to new conditions that it may survive in an altered environment. While the whole domain of *libertas* is by our system to be entrusted to provincial assemblies, the *Imperium* can no longer with any safety be exposed to such risk. Under a very nominal control by the people or their delegates, the Foreign and Colonial Offices, with the aid of the Civil Service, really manage the delicate relations with rival nations, vassal powers, and the independent Dominions. It is not proposed to take out of the hands of democracy any control which it at present exercises ; but we believe it more truthful and more wise to say honestly, where the competence of the people begins and ends. At the present time, any genuine personal interest of citizens in matters which they can know at first hand, has been wantonly discouraged ; witness the changes in the management of Primary Education. Instead, the poorer classes are put off with empty phrases about popular right and popular powers, which in their own lives they are not by any stretch of fancy made to experience. We believe in 'democratic' methods as a great educative force, not as the due of the individual, but as the interest of the State. The burden of government must be divided up as much as possible. Every man must be brought to feel himself an integral and a responsible factor. On this account adult suffrage is a logical result of the lengthy process of enfranchisement, and on this account only is it justified. But serious notice must be called to the mischief of a fraudulent and titular 'democracy,' in which the people, constantly reminded by flatterers of their freedom, are really slaves of officials,—or (perhaps still worse) of intellectual minorities.

Honest effort to restore Democracy to its proper sphere.

For the present then, it will be merely to recognize existing facts if we leave Imperial matters to a central Assembly. Let the Peerage elect one-sixth of their number, let the United Kingdom provide another one

Lords to be recruited by Imperial members.

hundred; while the Colonies and Dominions bring the total up to three hundred,—a suitable limit (it may be presumed) for a body that ‘means business.’ The tenure and mode of nomination might be left to further discussion when the general principle was conceded. Nor is the present essay designed to fix precisely the subjects to be considered and decided by such an assembly. Practical statesmen and men of affairs and committees must determine the details and working of schemes which may be recommended on broad lines by men of thought. One objection to such a composite house may here be noted: that the ‘sturdy democrats’ from our Colonies would refuse to elect members or to sit themselves in a House which still recognized the anachronism of birth-right. This is probably quite unfounded. Closer acquaintance would remove any prejudices of idealism, and convince the envoys from Greater Britain that the Peers have a certain quality and aptitude for the art of governing that no other class can afford. Certainly nothing would be more absurd than to throw deliberately into the scale of a permanent social Opposition a loyal, patriotic, and straightforward body of men with great names, great influence, and great traditions. It is not generally understood how much government suffers by the resolute aloofness of a noble class from affairs in many free countries. The aim of a Monarch, as opposed to a ‘republic,’ is to include in the governing order (required even in a free people) all elements of strength, all interests, all wholesome opinion. To exclude an aristocracy, admittedly possessing more weight and public respect than in any other land, would be to set up a silent and obstinate party of *non-possumus*,—by no means a negligible element. It would very soon be seen how little merely political power could effect against social and territorial influence. This is no threat of a convinced reactionary, only a plain statement of existing

Value of  
heredi-  
tary  
element.

Folly of  
seeking to  
exclude  
any factor  
in na-  
tional life.



facts. It is, as has been so often said, the greatest peril of democracy that men are so often contented with the name, and pay little heed to the substance.

The 'people' is not a faction or a fraction, but the whole: it cannot afford to lose the aid of any considerable or historic factor in the national life. Some prophets foresee the time in which Houses of Parliament might still continue a strange, Mediæval survival, occupied in trivial and lengthy routine, while the real power had migrated elsewhere, as in the United States. All true Government must be, above all in a self-governing country, a good-natured compromise. There is no such thing as unanimity, as the People's Will. Idealism must come to terms with facts and common sense. The British nobility (in spite of certain deplorable methods of recruiting it, which ought, forthwith, to cease) is a large asset, on which other men cast eyes of envy and admiration. Like every other interest, it must find its due place and recognition in a harmonious and efficient commonwealth.

National  
welfare  
(as a com-  
promise)  
must  
somehow  
include  
the whole.

## I.—SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Recapitulation : OUR task is now done : the outlines of a possible reform have been sketched. What has been the outcome of the enquiry ? First, to show the growth of the body politic from narrow and humble beginnings, the value of king and conquest and patronage, in extending the once-limited area of sympathy and common service.

1. Alien character of Government not lost, but emphasized in Democracy.

In so doing, the foreign and external character of the State, perhaps of all wide government, was noticed, a character it still bears to-day. The *mechanical* tendency was seen in all governmental action over large groups ; and appeared very conspicuous when the ideals of Christendom vanished in the sixteenth century, when competing nations rose (somewhat reluctantly) into vigour and self-consciousness under the monarchic impulse. The essential likeness of popular government to-day to its monarchic prototype of 'Divine right' was made clear ; except that all advances in science and intercourse have given to the modern State powers undreamt of by the old autocracy. Time has also thrust upon rulers new and unheard-of duties. Never losing its peculiar alien character, the Government of the moment finds that it must take up a burden of *tutelage* well-nigh universal. Ages were examined in which a tutelary class, set apart for this special task, performed their pastoral functions with more or less success.

2. Peril of entrusting wider power to avowed partizans of sections,

already unpopular and distrusted.

The question is now put : does the present state of Britain give ground for sanguine hopes in the competence or representative character of the new tutelary class

which must control the mechanism and administer to the people the decisions of the centre? It was pointed out that Government was unpopular and distrusted; at the same time the need for its further action could not be denied. The unreal claims of popular control were discussed. It was shown that the State, as ruler and official, is sectional and partizan; that democracy becomes a mere phrase owing to the centralism which collects life and authority in the Cabinet and the capital. It was maintained that a modern State is highly artificial and factitious; and coheres rather by *vis inertiae* than from any close tie. In spite of some survival of unreflecting sentiment, it is a mechanical aggregate without moral appeal.

3. State-  
unity not  
sacro-  
sanct, but  
modern  
and  
highly  
artificial.

The first needful reform was seen to be a dissolution of the Commons, only in name a predominant or a popular chamber; and the extensive *devolution* of *local* powers to four or five provincial assemblies,—as one step at least towards a truer use of democracy.

(a) Com-  
mons to  
be dis-  
solved, its  
functions  
devolved.

It was then asserted that for the more difficult and imperial issues which affect the central Government, an imperial Senate was ready to hand in a House of Lords, insensibly passing out of the chrysalis of pure heredity into wider interests and usefulness. In this would sit, not only chosen men of the present aristocracy, but delegates from all parts of the Empire. The Sovereign would exchange, for a more public prerogative, that secret influence and advice which has for so long been of inestimable value to the country. Meantime social reform must keep pace with political change: the personal relations between employers and employed must be resumed; corporations and associations of shareholders (controlling labour through middlemen) must be broken up; and some respect paid to the principle of gratuitous service, so long the national pride. Only with the restoration of respect to Authority

(b) Re-  
modelled  
House of  
Peers to  
control  
Imperial  
(non-  
party)  
concerns.

(c) Sove-  
reign to  
resume  
*personal*  
relations,

(to be  
imitated  
else-  
where).

(d) Reas-  
sertion of  
gratuitous  
service.



(e) Re-  
vival of  
respect.

(f) Divi-  
sion of  
business  
for *expert*  
and

*amateur*,  
of agreed  
from con-  
tentious  
matters.

Only so  
*Imperium*  
and  
*Libertas*  
found  
com-  
patible.

could any real improvement or better feeling come into our public life. It was maintained that this could be effected by severing matters of contention from matters of agreement, by investing the still dignified and trusted elements in our constitution with real power.

In such a scheme the details of reconstruction were left to be devised by practical statesmen in a province wherein the amateur or even the idealist could be of little value. But it was maintained that if modern times aim at reconciling the sovereignty of the State with the old Liberal sovereignty of the Individual, *Imperium* and *Libertas*,—some such ideal must be adopted: unless we are determined to forfeit the integrity of our empire, and to lose the real freedom of our citizens,—to waste the resources and assets of our country, and expose ourselves hopeless and disunited to the contempt or the assault of foreign nations.

THE END







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